

2004 Kansas Legal Needs Assessment

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Executive Summary

Kansas Legal Services, Inc. (KLS) works to meet the civil legal needs of low income Kansans. KLS is the only statewide provider of a wide range of civil legal services in Kansas. Without the assistance of KLS, most of the low income population would have no way of obtaining access to the justice system. In order to better understand the needs of this diverse client base, the Kansas Legal Needs Assessment (KLNA) was initiated by Kansas Legal Services, Inc., and the Kansas Equal Access to Justice Committee in conjunction with the Sociology Department of the University of Kansas.

The KLNA was created to explore three basic questions: 1) What are the legal needs of low income Kansans? 2) Are these legal needs being met? 3) How aware is this population of the legal services available to them? By answering these questions the assessment aims to quantify what legal problems exist in Kansas and to what extent those needs are recognized and resolved. The KLNA uses both qualitative and quantitative methods to investigate these issues.

A set of open-ended interviews with a diverse group of experts serves as the qualitative component of the KLNA. These experts include members of the Equal Access to Justice Committee (EAJC) as well as field workers who serve the low income population. Their insights provide professional estimates and community input into the assessment. These interviews were then used to guide the creation of a statewide survey of low income Kansans.

The survey was designed to collect demographic information and quantitative data about respondents' experiences with 68 legal problems. The survey was administered to 587 respondents by trained interviewers in both Spanish and English and distributed across the state in eleven different districts proportionate to the number of residents below the federal poverty level in each district. The respondents were asked about legal situations they may have faced in the preceding twelve months. For every

legal problem a set of supplemental questions gathered data on how the respondent dealt with the legal situation. These supplemental questions shed light on the motivations and actions of low income Kansans. For example: Do low income Kansans seek legal assistance for housing issues? If not, why not? If so, where do they go for help? Are they satisfied with the help they received?

Key Findings from the Service Provider Interviews

The service provider interviews identified several key problem areas. All of the interviewees stated that lack of funding for new or existing programs was the greatest barrier to providing legal services to low income Kansans. Although other problems exist (such as ignorance of the court system), inadequate funding of both the judiciary and legal services prevents the legal system from handling current legal needs.

One effect of inadequate funding is a lack of public education regarding the current resources available. Interviewees noted more public education regarding legal rights and responsibilities is needed in the areas of housing, consumer, and family issues. For example, expanding current Fair Housing Initiative Programs (FHIP) grants was suggested as a way to handle housing education. Greater public knowledge and awareness of existing resources may resolve many situations without the need of formal legal assistance.

Several interviewees stated that the largest group of Kansans who have almost no access to the justice system are those without legal status. This group of undocumented workers pays into the tax system and plays an important role in the state and federal economy but is denied most of the services available. They often face housing and employment discrimination because they have no access to the courts to hold the discriminators accountable.

All interviewees noted that the largest unmet need is among the poor. Income is positively correlated with access to the court system. While the group with the largest

need is those below the poverty level, the group most ignored by government assistance is the low to middle income population. This economic group does not qualify for most legal assistance yet lack the income to afford an attorney.

Service providers identified family law cases as the most important need because clients often are debilitated until those situations are resolved. It was pointed out by several interviewees that unresolved custody and divorce issues can affect eligibility for public housing and other public benefit programs.

Nearly all of the respondents noted the unique importance of KLS' ability to offer direct legal advice and representation. Many specialized service agencies offer client consultation and a variety of other services but look to KLS for situations that require an attorney's assistance.

Key Findings from the Needs Survey of Low Income Kansans

Nearly 80 percent of low income Kansas households reported facing one or more legal problems in the past year. Those households who reported experiencing the most need tended to be urban and below the poverty level. Native Americans and Asian-Americans, and those without a mailing address also reported facing a high level of legal need.

The most commonly cited legal problems reported involved consumer issues, housing, and family law. Consumer, family, and housing legal issues were reported by approximately one-third of respondents. Additionally, over a quarter of the households surveyed reported experiencing legal situations involving employment, municipal and public services, and other civil rights.

Not all Kansans in this study reported facing the same number of legal needs. Households below the poverty level reported a greater relative percentage of problems

involving employment, housing, other civil rights issues, public benefits, and education. Female respondents reported facing a higher percentage of legal problems involving education, family law, and immigration issues. Nearly one-fourth of female respondents reported a problem with domestic violence, while roughly one-fifth reported a problem with child support. The homeless and those living in urban areas also reported having faced more legal problems than average in the past year.

Over 40 percent of all households reported experiencing discrimination of some kind. Respondents reported perceived experiences of discrimination primarily in the areas of employment, discriminatory policing, and health care. Over half of all employment legal problems reported involved some form of perceived discrimination. Women, racial minorities, and the homeless reported facing a disproportionate number of discrimination problems. About 45 percent of all female and over 60 percent of all homeless respondents reported perceived experiences of discrimination.

Responses to Legal Problems

Households reported seeking legal help for less than one-third (31 percent) of all legal problems experienced. Households with a higher educational attainment reported seeking out help more often, as did families with a respondent over 60 years old.

Persons reporting problems involving family law, estates and trust, and other civil rights issues were most likely to seek legal help. Consumer issues and tax-related problems also were above the average rate of legal assistance. The lowest rates of respondents seeking assistance were with issues in health, public benefits, housing, and municipal and public services.

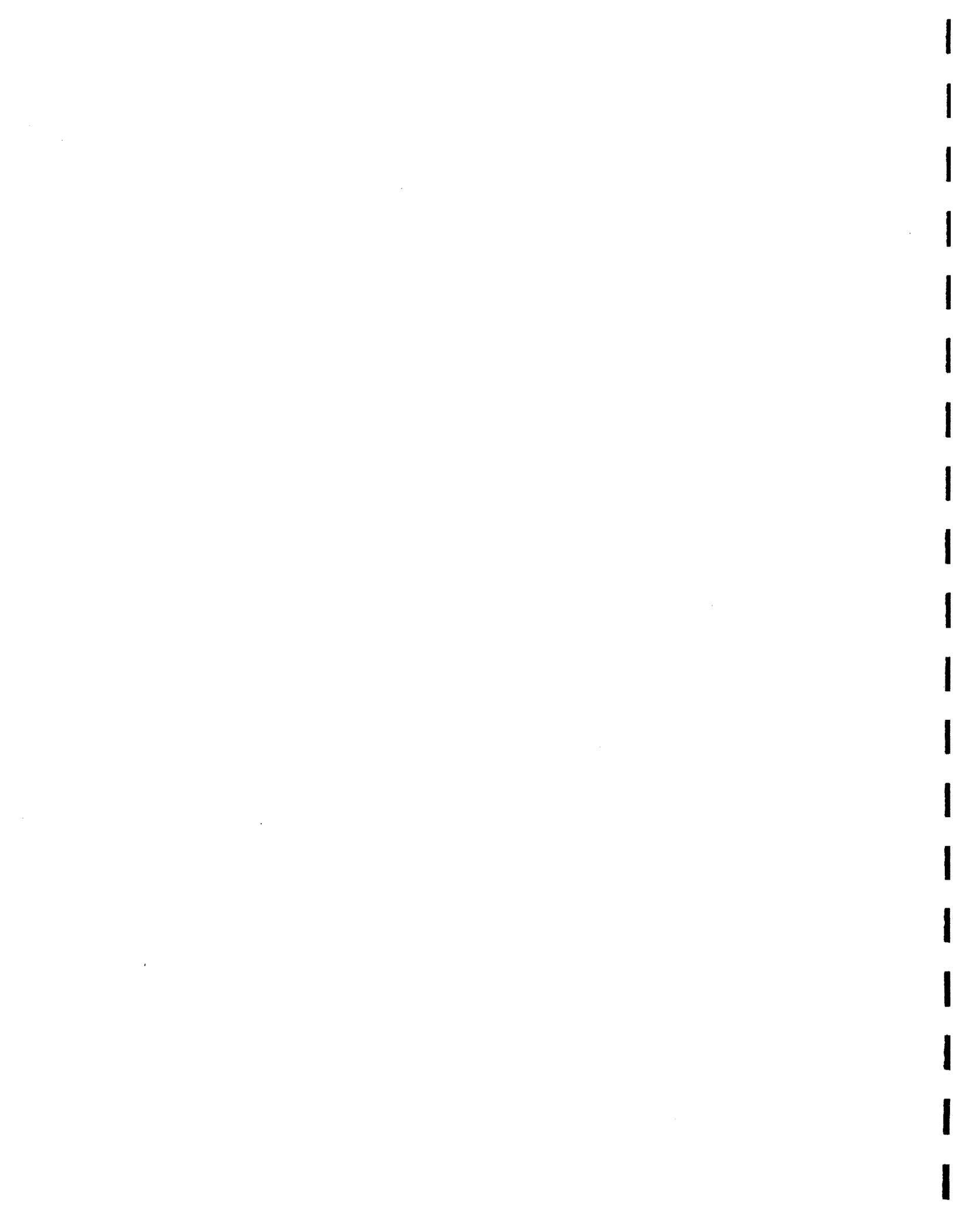
The reasons reported by most low income Kansans for not seeking legal help were concerns about costs and a perceived sense of hopelessness. Respondents reported they were more likely to seek help if they were aware of legal service programs such as

KLS. They were also more likely to seek help for what they reported as “extremely important” problems. Notwithstanding, over 93 percent of reported problems that were not addressed with legal assistance were identified by the respondent as “important,” “very important,” or “extremely important.”

About half of respondents reported that they were aware of the existence of legal services programs. Yet, only one in three reported awareness of whether or not they were eligible for free or reduced fee services. Racial minorities and those with lower levels of education reported less knowledge of legal resources. However, more women than men reported knowing about legal resources.

About 40 percent of the time respondents reported going to private attorneys. Kansas Legal Services was reported by respondents as the second most commonly sought service. KLS handled about 20 percent of all legal problems for which people reported seeking legal services. Households reported they most often went to KLS for situations involving family law, public benefits, health, and other civil rights issues.

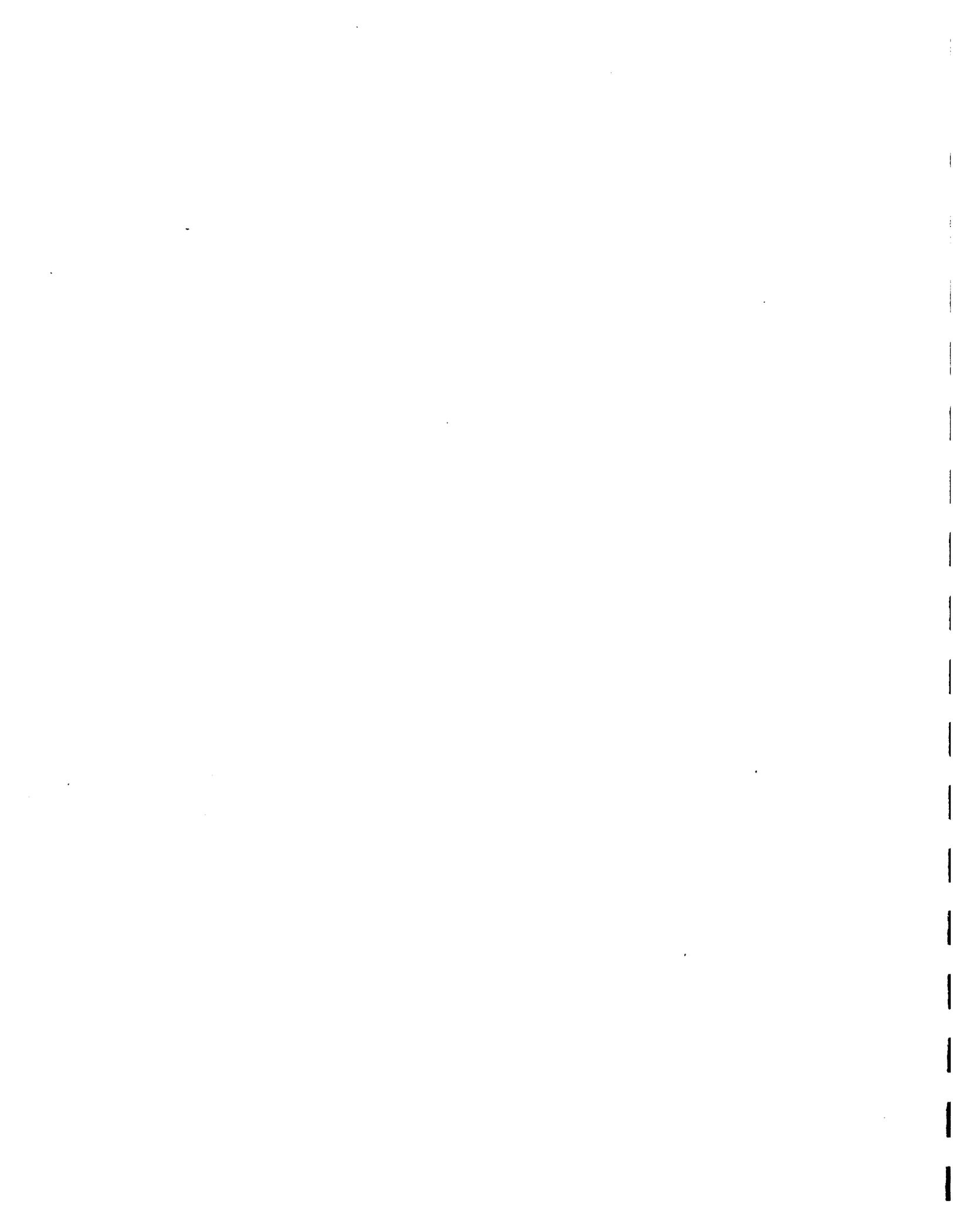
Households above the poverty level reported that they were more likely to seek out a private attorney. Caucasian and Hispanic-American households reported they were most likely to seek out a private attorney, whereas African Americans reported they were less likely to seek out a private attorney. African-Americans reported they received the most assistance through other means, such as family or friends. Respondents over 60 reported being much more likely than other age groups to either go to KLS or seek out a private lawyer.



I. Introduction:

The state of Kansas has never had a comprehensive statewide civil legal needs assessment for low income Kansans. In order to better understand the legal needs of this diverse population, KLS and the Equal Access to Justice Committee, in partnership with the University of Kansas Department of Sociology, created the Kansas Legal Needs Assessment. The KLNA addresses a wide variety of civil legal issues including the areas of consumer, housing, family, employment, municipal and public services, civil rights, health care, estate management, public benefits, education, immigration, disabilities, elder law, Native American and migrant law.

By identifying the legal needs of low income Kansans, the KLNA will be used by the Legal Services Corporation, Kansas Legal Services Inc., the Equal Access to Justice Committee and other service agencies in Kansas to guide policy decisions regarding the allocation and delivery of resources.



II. Methods: Determining Legal Needs

Two studies were used in the Kansas Legal Needs Assessment. The first of these studies, hereafter referred to as the service provider interviews, was a qualitative interview study designed with wide-ranging, open-ended questions in order to gather information from the professional legal assistance community in the state of Kansas. The service provider information was then used to guide the format of the quantitative study, which was distributed to low income Kansans throughout the state. By combining both qualitative and quantitative data formats, the KLNA has greater depth than if it used only one form of data collection. Findings from both studies are included in the assessment.

A definition of what constitutes a legal problem is needed in order to determine what legal needs exist. The KLNA uses an accepted definition:

A legal problem is defined as one that, if brought to the attention of a legal services attorney, would be recognized as within the purview of the law and mandate of the program. It would, therefore, merit at the very least the attorney's professional attention and advice. A legal need arises from, and is inferred from, the existence of a legal problem. Operationally, the existence of the problem is inferred from an affirmative answer to a question briefly describing a legal fact pattern. (Goodman 1986 NJ LNA)

The service provider interviews consisted of a basic set of open-ended questions. The interviewees included representatives from the judicial system, The Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services offices, Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence, Trial Lawyers Association, Housing and Credit Counseling, Housing and Urban Development, homeless shelters, Hispanic advocacy programs, KLS, Inc., Housing Authorities, and workforce training centers. The interviewees were selected in an attempt to include a wide range of the service community. These interviews assisted in the development of the statewide quantitation survey of low income Kansans.

The bulk of data in the Kansas Legal Needs Assessment is based on a statewide face-to-face survey of about 100 questions administered by trained interviewers to low

income Kansans. The survey was designed to quantify and identify 68 civil legal problems. The survey deals with situations that have occurred in the past twelve months. It explores why respondents do not seek legal assistance and where they go if they do seek legal assistance. Respondents were questioned on their knowledge of what services are available and if they know basic information about the court system. Respondents were also asked basic demographic questions. After each survey was completed the interviewer was asked to rate the respondent's cooperation and ability to recall answers.

In order to keep the respondents from deciding for themselves whether or not a situation they experienced was a legal one, the survey was named, "The State of Kansas Comprehensive Needs Study." The survey questions did not explicitly ask if respondents experienced 'legal problems' but instead asked in a yes or no format whether or not the respondents experienced 'situations' that are unambiguously interpreted as the existence or nonexistence of a legal problem. These measures were taken to eliminate self-report bias by keeping the respondent from answering questions based on their own criteria and knowledge of the court system.

The survey was distributed to the eleven KLS offices around the state. Census data was collected for each of the eleven KLS districts and the number of surveys completed by each district reflects the proportion of respondents below the 2003 federal poverty level. Each office distributed the surveys to local service providers and other trained volunteers to administer the surveys. The interviews lasted between forty-five minutes and one hour and fifteen minutes. Respondents were compensated ten dollars or an equivalent for their time.

The overall response rate was very high at approximately 82 percent (i.e., of 800 surveys distributed over 650 were returned). About 60 surveys were removed from the sample because the households were above 300 percent of the poverty line. This made the total number of the sample 587. The KLNA defines low income as those households that fall below 300 percent of the federal poverty line. Approximately fifty-eight percent of households were below the poverty line while forty-two percent were above.

III. Service Provider Interviews

1. Barriers to Serving Legal Needs

Above all else, service providers identified lack of funding as the most common barrier to the justice system for low income households. Although funding was not directly addressed in the semi-structured interviews, lack of sufficient funding was universally recognized as the most important limiting factor. A majority of respondents stated, that above and beyond identifying any particular legal need, adequate funding of legal programs and services must come first. Legal assistance programs only serve a fraction of the needs of the poor that could be addressed if adequate funding were to be made available. Several respondents noted that inadequate funding of this degree could not be handled by simple reallocation of resources.

Consistent funding is an important issue even for programs that currently exist. During the interviews several respondents noted that funding needed to be expanded for different programs, naming examples: the Fair Housing Initiative Program, Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) client representation, and access for undocumented workers. Since the interviews, some of these programs have had funding reinstated while other programs have had funding reduced due to federal and state budget cuts. The lack of adequate funding directly affects the quality and availability of programs offered. Furthermore, this leads to a breakdown in the information network about what services are truly available and what services are not.

One EAJC member noted that inadequate funding affects KLS's ability to hold onto attorneys long enough to deal with systemic issues. The interviewee felt that longer contracts and pay more comparable to that of the private sector would increase the effectiveness of KLS staff. He argued that if KLS is training new attorneys every few years, they cannot begin to perform well nor can they build the community necessary to solve more difficult systemic problems. Lack of funding in this case allows problem areas to worsen because root causes are not addressed.

Interviewees specializing in the areas of consumer, family, and housing noted that improved education and awareness would help remove barriers to legal assistance and potentially lessen the amount of services needed. Interviewees identified two key areas in which education could improve: the awareness of available resources, and knowledge of rights and responsibilities. The results of the statewide survey validate these assertions showing that many low income Kansans are unaware of legal assistance and often fail to recognize their rights to legal assistance.

Improved knowledge of clients' rights and responsibilities has the potential to prevent many issues from becoming legal situations. Education is also needed so that Kansans can simply identify legal situations. One EAJC member said that Fair-Housing Initiative Program (FHIP) grants need to be expanded to further educate low income Kansans about housing discrimination. The interviewees said that Kansans are not aware of their rights in housing, employment, and consumer law. They suggest that many times legal problems are not addressed simply because people feel there is nothing to be done. This assertion was consistent with the statewide survey where 30-40 percent of respondents didn't seek legal assistance because they thought nothing could be done or felt it wasn't a legal problem.

2. Populations Without Access to Legal Services

The largest group of Kansans who lack any access to services are those without legal immigration status. For the past ten years the federal government and the state of Kansas have failed to offer any form of adequate legal coverage for this population. During that time the Legal Services Corporation has imposed restrictions which reduce the ability of legal services providers to serve many immigrants. Those interviewed believe that these undocumented workers deserve to have access to services because they pay into the tax system and play an important role in supporting the state's economy. In some states this systemic problem has been mitigated by non-profits who provide legal

services to undocumented workers, but Kansas has not generated these resources, leaving a large population without access to services.

A service provider in western Kansas said that many attorneys take advantage of undocumented clients seeking legal aid – taking their money while failing to render the services promised. The interviewee went on to say that in western Kansas the majority of undocumented workers are employed at large meat packing plants or feedlots working long hours in dangerous conditions, yet they are often denied workers' compensation for work-related injuries and have no access to attorneys to assist them. Several interviewees made the point that undocumented immigrants often face housing discrimination because they believe that they have no access to the courts to hold the discriminators accountable. Another member of the EAJC said potential clients who qualify for service most often do not take advantage of those services because they fear deportation.

All interviewees noted that the largest unmet need is with the poor, both above and below the poverty line. Although income is positively correlated with fewer legal issues and better access to the court system; those immediately above the income guidelines for free legal assistance are often unable to afford representation. Interviewees said that fee reduction programs are helpful but need to be expanded in order to better serve the low income population. Several interviewees stressed that the need for legal assistance will only decline following a rise in income for low income Kansans. The root cause of most unmet legal need is poverty, therefore, if Kansas is to significantly lower the amount of unmet need, Kansas must raise the wages of the lowest paid workers.

3. Additional Service Provider Comments

Family law, including domestic violence, child custody, and divorce, was a major area of unmet legal need identified by service providers. Service providers identified family law cases as the most important because clients are often unable to seek other services until those situations are resolved. In a large number of cases, lack of awareness

of services, or perceived inaccessibility of those services, forces many low income Kansas women to remain in abusive relationships. As one respondent stated, "I have clients who are themselves eligible for housing assistance, yet they cannot afford to divorce their spouse whose background makes them ineligible. Until they get a divorce they are either homeless or often continue living in a very hostile situation." This situation affects far more women than men. Many of these women often do not have access to all the financial information required to apply for public assistance. One service provider stressed that many more attorneys are needed for direct representation in domestic violence cases.

When asked *What level of legal service do you think is most important?* nearly all of the respondents noted the importance of KLS' ability to offer direct representation. Several reported that many specialized service agencies offer client consultation and look to KLS for situations that require an attorney's assistance. One respondent went on to say that large areas of unmet need exist statewide for both direct representation and attorney advice in the areas of housing and consumer law. As previously stated, service agencies exist, but inadequate funding keeps them from providing services for all those who qualify - more programs need to be expanded so that they cover the entire state rather than just the urban areas.

IV. Survey of Low Income Kansans

1. What is the Extent of Legal Need?

The Kansas Legal Needs Assessment, KLNA, found nearly 80 percent of low income Kansas households reported facing one or more legal problems over a twelve-month period. The respondents who reported experiencing the most legal problems tended to be homeless¹, urban, and below the poverty level. Women, Native Americans, Asian-Americans, and respondents between 30 to 45 years old also reported more legal needs than average.

In a twelve-month period approximately eighty percent² of all respondents from low income households reported experiencing at least one civil legal problem (Fig. 1). Additionally, over sixty percent of households reported experiencing at least two civil legal problems while nearly half encountered three or more.

¹ Homelessness was defined as respondents without a mailing address.

² Unless otherwise stated the margin of error is approximately plus or minus 4 percent.

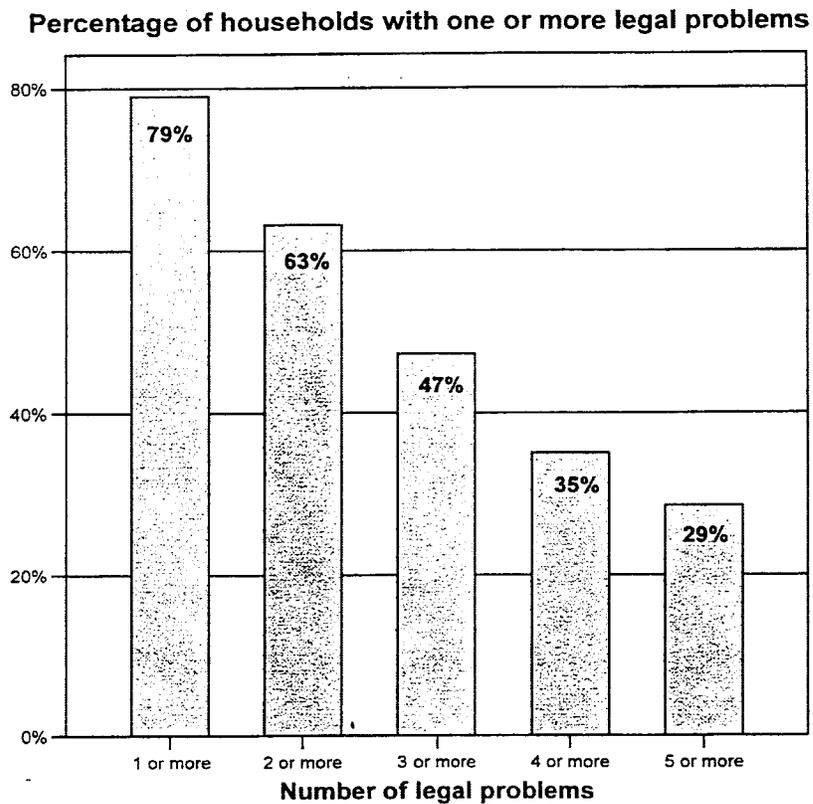


Fig. 1 Percentage of low income households experiencing one or more legal problems over twelve months. For example, seventy-nine percent of all households experienced one or more legal needs in one year.

The average number of legal problems reported was 3.4 a year per household. The average number of problems varied according to several demographic groups, as follows:

Average number of legal problems, by demographic groups

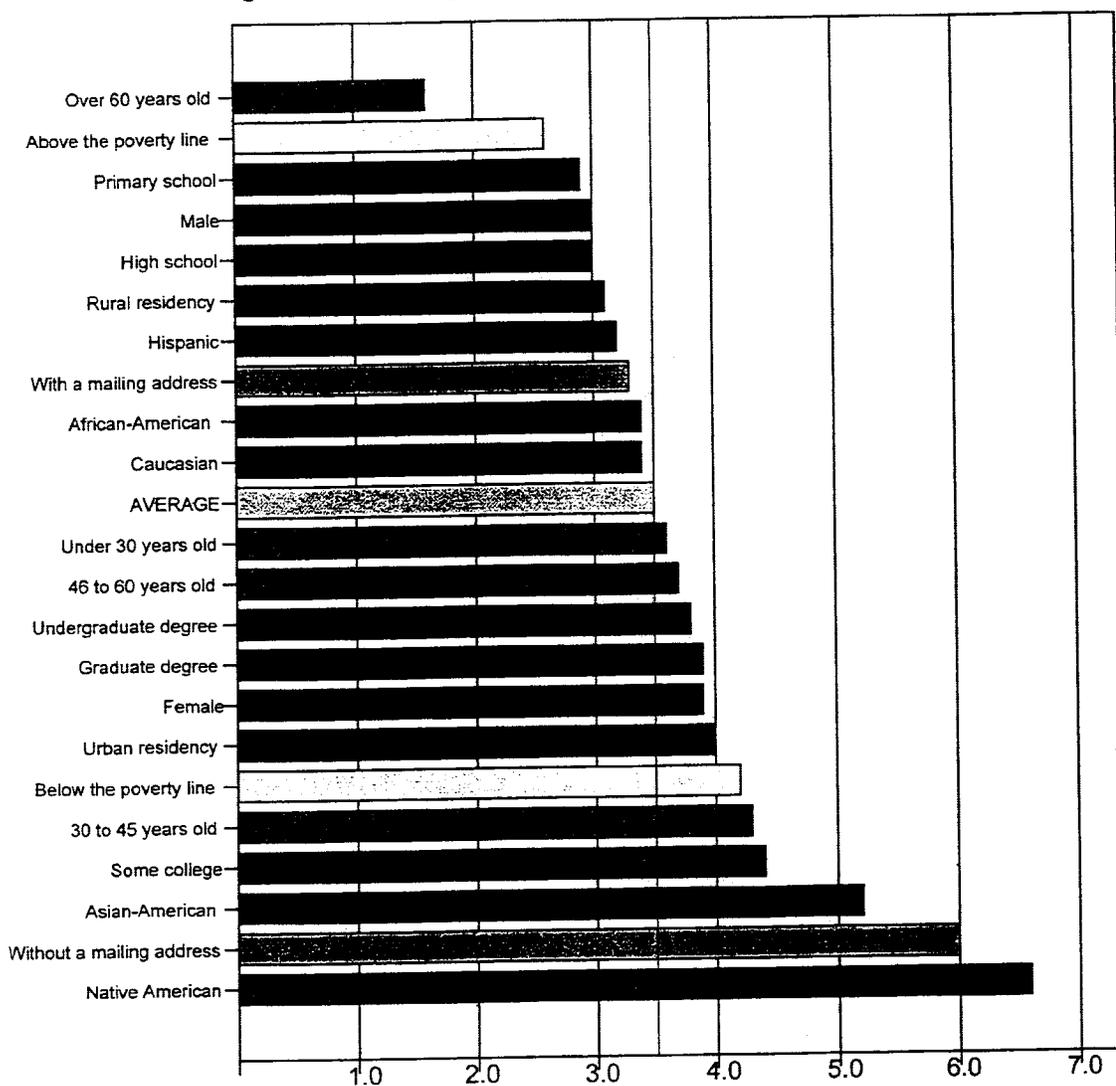


Fig. 2 Average number of legal problems per household per year according to demographic groups. For example, households with a Native American respondent experienced an average of 6.6 legal needs over a twelve-month period. The red reference line at 3.4 indicates the average for all households.

Poverty level: In regard to poverty level, households below the federal poverty line reported a much higher annual mean of legal problems. They averaged 4.2 problems a year while those above the poverty level averaged only 2.6 problems.

Homelessness: Also important in the number of legal problems a household reported facing was whether or not they reported a mailing address. Those households without a mailing address reported facing 6.0 problems annually whereas those with an address

reported 3.3 problems. The KLNA defines homelessness as 'lacking a mailing address' and thus labeled as homeless those respondents living in temporary shelters or other unstable living arrangements.

Gender: In terms of gender, households with a female respondent are more likely to report facing legal needs than those with a male respondent, 3.9 households versus 3.0 households respectively.

Race or ethnicity: Native Americans and Asian-Americans reported encountering the greatest number of problems annually, with 6.6 for Native Americans and 5.2 for Asian-Americans.¹ Caucasian, African-American, Hispanic, and Mexican-American respondents were all very near average in the number of problems.

Education level: In regard to education, those households with a respondent who completed some college reported more legal problems than those with a respondent who reached only primary school.

Age group: Among age groups, households with a respondent 30 to 45 years old were the most likely to report encountering legal problems, with an average of 4.3 needs a year. Households with a respondent over 60 were the least likely to report encountering a legal problem with an average of 1.6 annually.

Geographic location: Urban residents were significantly more likely to report facing legal problems than rural residents, 4.0 to 3.1.

¹ The KLNA only includes a few Native American and Asian American respondents - proportional to the state census data.

2. What Types of Legal Problems Do the Low Income Face?

The most common legal problems involved consumer issues, housing, and family law. Approximately one-third of households experienced at least one problem related to consumer issues, family law, and housing, respectively. Additionally, over a quarter of households experienced legal situations involving employment, municipal and public services, and other civil rights.

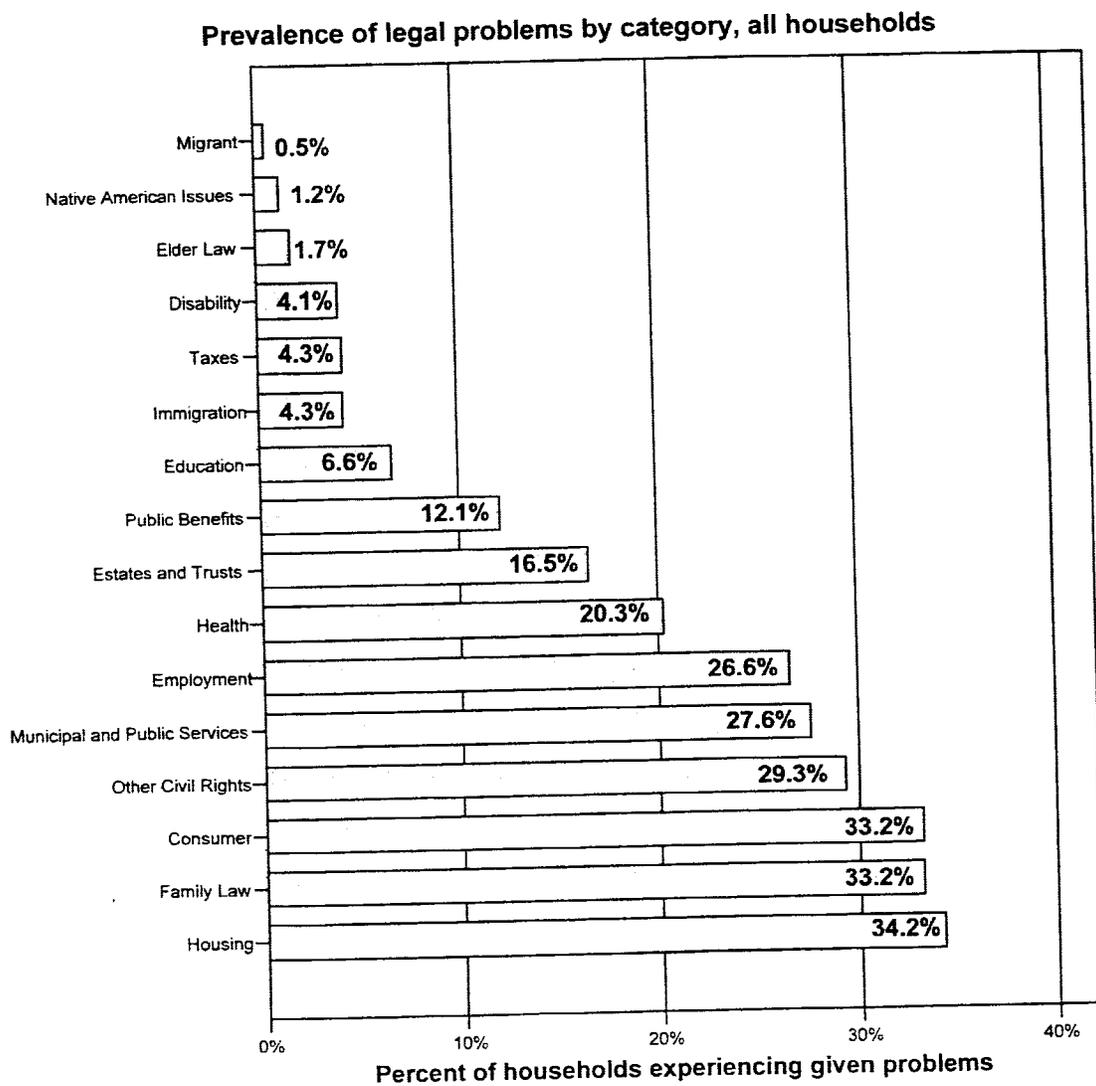


Fig. 3 Percent of all households that experience given problems by category. For example, 34.2 percent of all low income households dealt with at least one housing problem annually.

3. Does Legal Need Vary for Different Demographic Groups?

Women reported facing a higher percentage of legal problems involving family law while male respondents reported facing more issues with municipal and public services and employment. Households below the poverty level reported a greater relative percentage of problems involving employment, housing, other civil rights issues, public benefits, and education.

Gender: Women reported experiencing a greater number of legal problems than did men in the area of family law. Men, on the other hand, reported facing a higher percentage of problems dealing with employment, and municipal and public services (which includes police discrimination) and other civil rights issues.

Within the family issues category, a much higher percentage of women reported experiencing legal problems than did men. Nearly one in four female respondents reported a problem with domestic violence, while seventeen percent reported a problem with child support. In contrast, only three percent of men reported a problem with domestic violence and less than five percent reported a problem with child support.

Race and ethnicity: The types of legal problems low income people reported facing varied only slightly relative to race. All races tended toward the overall trend of consumer, housing, and family law as the top three legal categories. At least two exceptions are worth noting: Hispanics and Mexican-Americans reported experiencing a higher percentage of employment problems than average, and Asian-Americans reported experiencing more civil rights issues than average.

Income: While income doesn't seem to greatly affect the type of legal problems experienced, households below the federal poverty line reported a significantly higher annual mean of legal problems. They averaged 4.2 problems a year while those above the poverty level average only 2.6 problems.

Households above the poverty line reported dealing with slightly more family, estate, and consumer-related legal problems. Households below the poverty line reported

a greater relative percentage of problems related to employment, housing, civil rights issues, public benefits, and education.

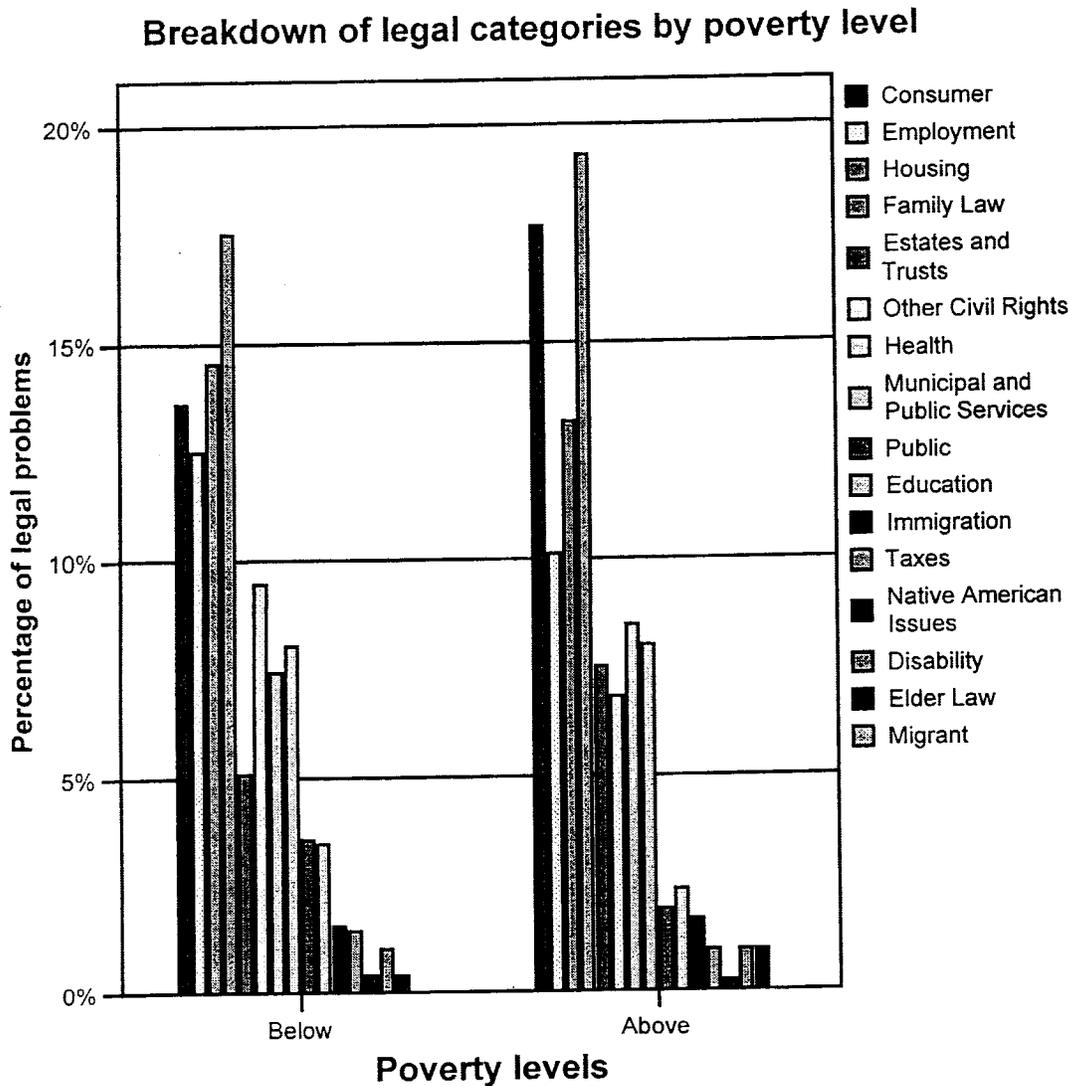


Fig. 4 Breakdown of legal categories by poverty levels. For example, 12.5 percent of the legal needs of the respondents below poverty level were employment related.

Geographic location: Low income Kansans varied only slightly in relation to geography in their reports of legal problems. Both rural and urban respondents reported legal problems in the areas of consumer, housing, and family law. Respondents in rural areas were slightly more likely to report family and consumer issues. Respondents in urban areas reported a higher relative percentage of issues related to housing, education, and public benefits.

4. Do Legal Problems Involve Discrimination?

Over forty percent of low income households reported experiencing discrimination. Respondents reported discrimination in the areas of employment, discriminatory policing, and health care. Over half of all the legal problems in the employment category involved reports of discrimination. Women, racial minorities, and the homeless reported facing a disproportionate number of discrimination problems.

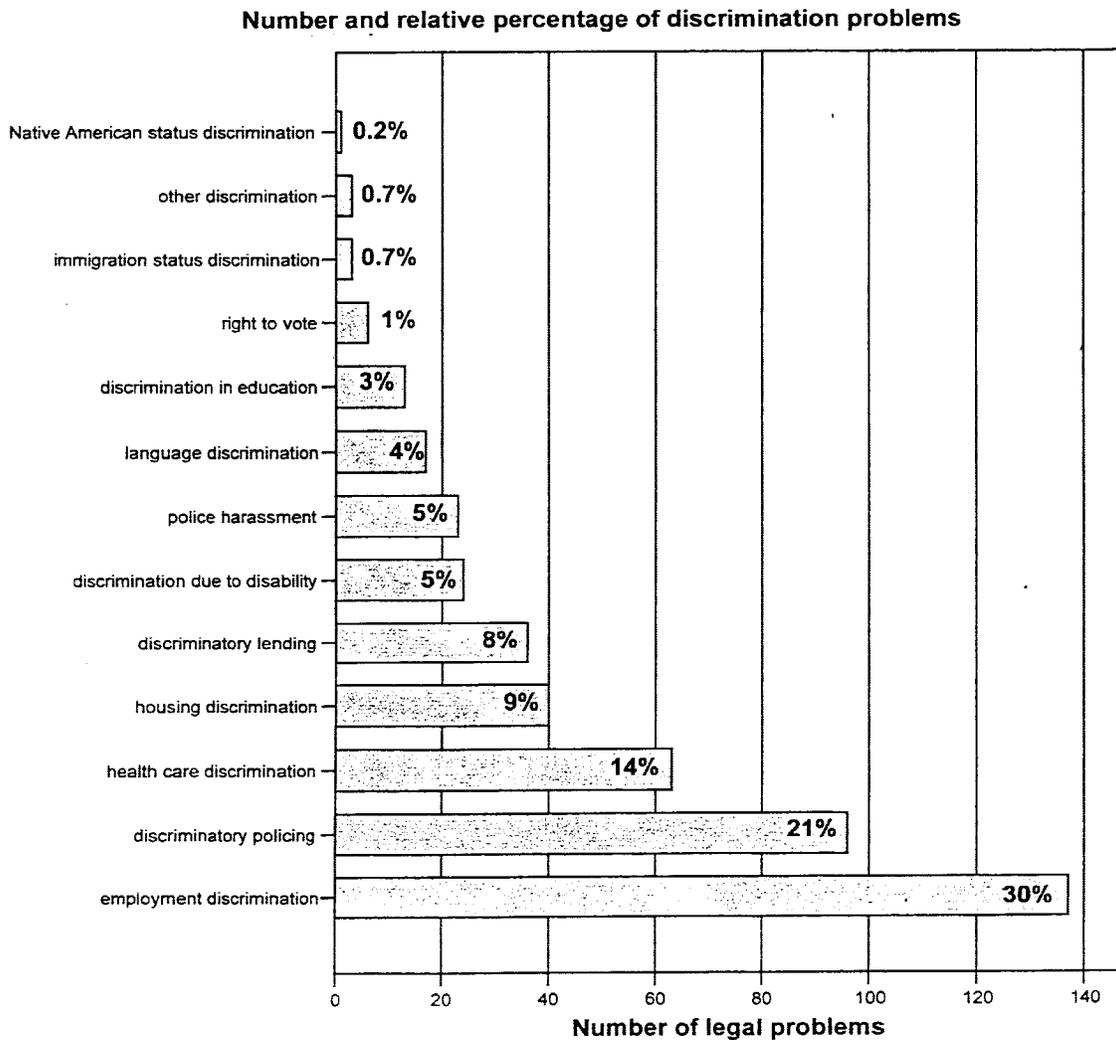


Fig. 5 Number and relative percentage of discrimination problems. For example, thirty percent of all discrimination problems reported entailed employment discrimination.

Forty-two percent of all low income households reported facing at least one incident of discrimination annually. Nearly one-third of these problems entailed employment discrimination, one-fifth discriminatory policing, and nearly fifteen percent health care discrimination.

Discrimination made up a high percentage of the legal problems reported in some categories (Fig. 6). In employment issues, for instance, over half of all problems reported involved discrimination, while over forty percent of problems in the health and municipal and public services categories involved discrimination.

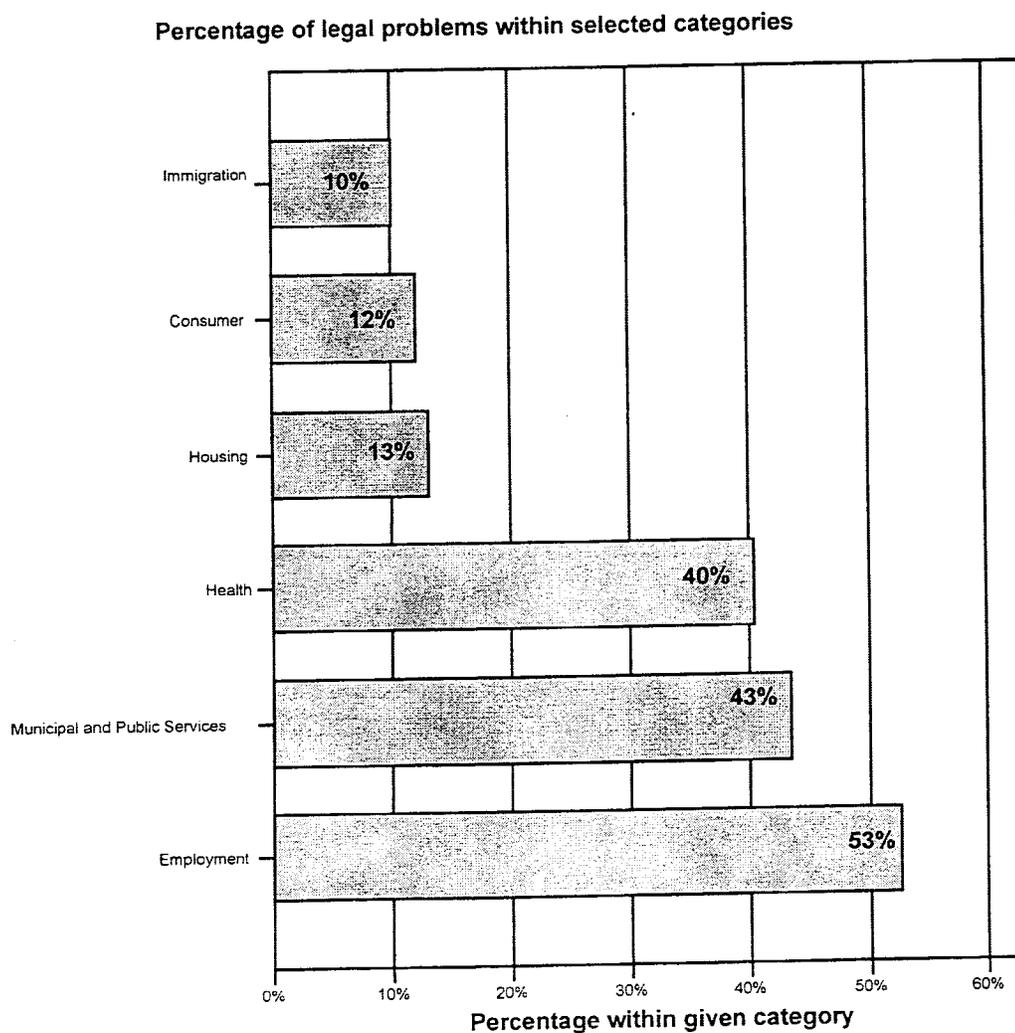


Fig. 6 Percentage of legal problems which entail discrimination within selected categories. For example, fifty-three percent of the legal problems reported in the employment category had to do with discrimination.

The number of reported discrimination problems households encountered varied according to demographic groups.

Homelessness: Respondents without a mailing address were much more likely to report facing discrimination than respondents with an address (**Fig. 7**). Over sixty percent of homeless respondents reported experiencing discrimination, compared to thirty-five percent of those with a mailing address. Problems reported with discrimination comprised nearly a quarter of all legal situations for the homeless.

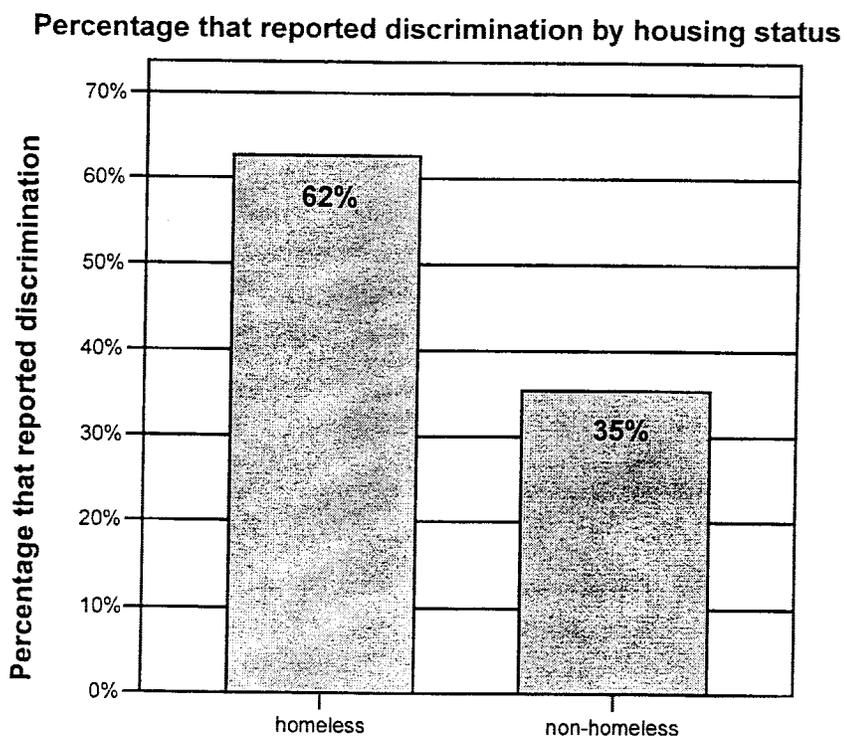


Fig. 7 Percentage of homeless/non-homeless households that reported discrimination.

Race or ethnicity: A greater percentage of racial minority respondents reported experiencing discrimination problems; and discriminatory situations took up a greater percentage of total legal problems for racial minorities than for Caucasians. About one-fifth of the legal problems reported by Caucasians involved discrimination, whereas over a quarter of the problems reported by Hispanics or Mexican-Americans entailed discrimination (**Fig. 8**).

Percentage of problems dealing with discrimination by race

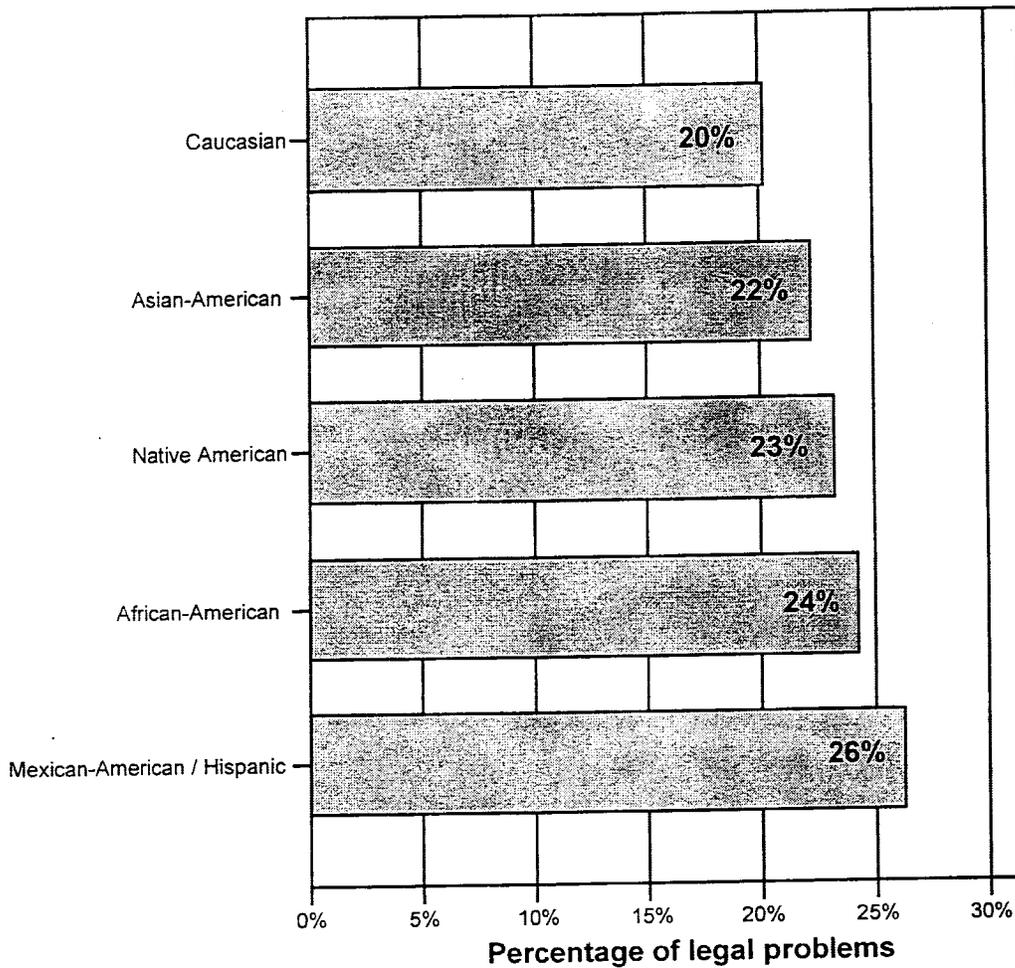
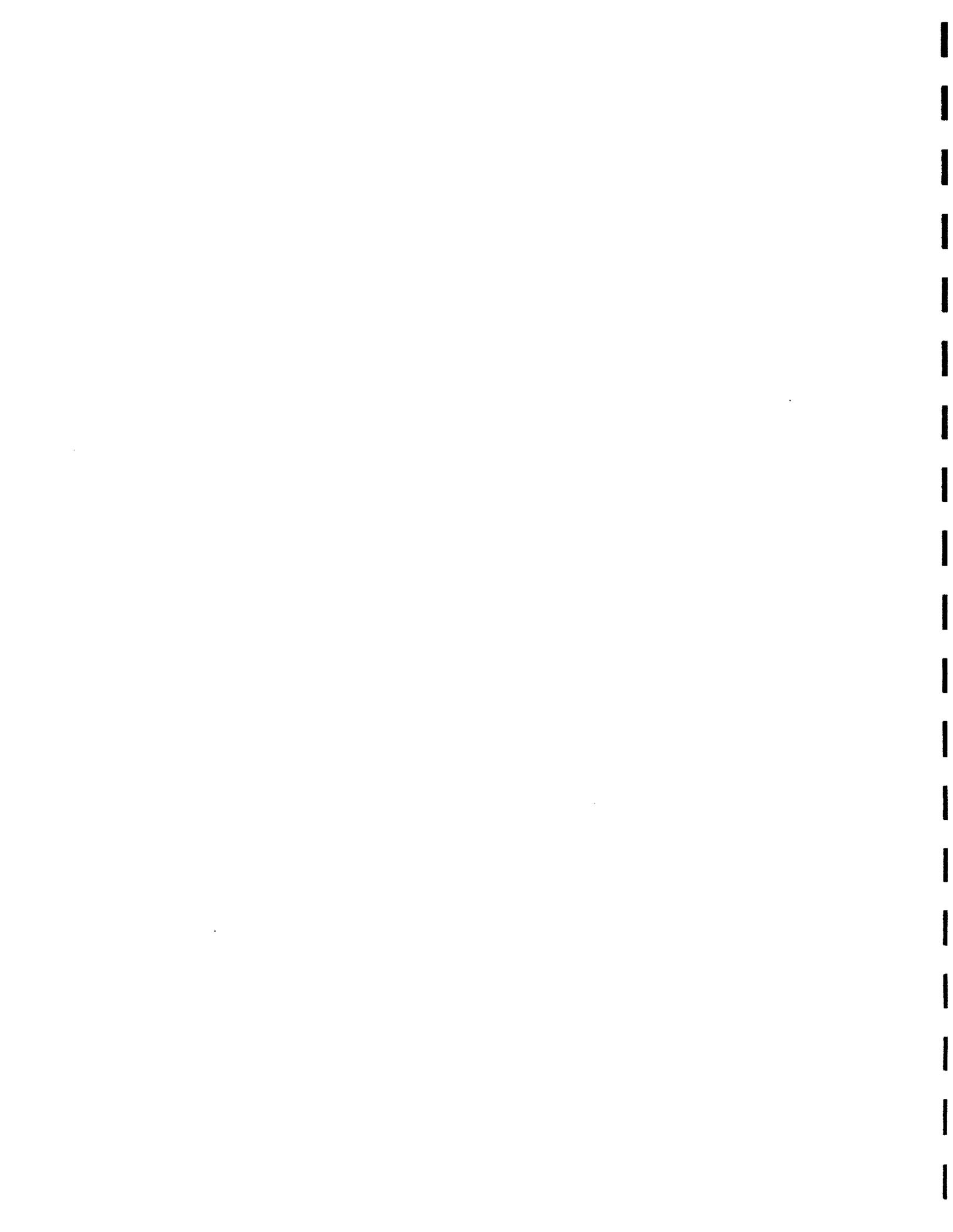


Fig. 8 Percentage of reported problems dealing with discrimination by race. For example, twenty-six percent of all reported problems faced by Hispanics or Mexican-Americans involved discrimination.

Gender: Women were slightly more likely to report experiencing discrimination than were men. Approximately forty-five percent of households with a female respondent reported experiencing discrimination, whereas about thirty-nine percent of households with a male respondent did so. The relative percentage of legal problems reported involving discrimination was about the same for both genders.



V. Responses to Legal Problems

A supplemental survey was given each time a respondent answered yes to the existence of a legal problem. The supplemental questions were designed to determine whether or not respondents sought legal help and where they sought legal assistance. Respondents were also asked to rate their satisfaction with legal assistance received. Most importantly, when the respondent chose to not seek legal assistance, the supplemental asked for reasons why.

1. Are Low Income Kansans Seeking Legal Assistance?

Households reported seeking legal help in less than one-third of all reported problems. Rates of legal assistance were largely uninfluenced by race, gender, and poverty levels. Households with higher education levels reported seeking help more often, as did families with a respondent over 60 years old.

Respondents who reported seeking legal help for legal problems was slightly less than a third of all persons who reported legal problems. Legal assistance included nearly any kind of help, such as hotlines, private lawyers, organizations like Kansas Legal Services, and other social service providers.

Rates of seeking legal assistance were approximately the same across race, gender, geographic location, and poverty levels. In each group, the various rates of seeking legal assistance were around the average of thirty-one percent. However, some variation did occur with respect to educational levels and age groups.

Educational levels: Respondents in households with primary school as the highest level of education reported seeking legal help one-fifth of the time. In contrast, respondents in households with a member attending at least some college reported seeking legal help over one-third of the time.

Age group: Rates of legal assistance also varied in relation to age groups. Households with a respondent below 30 reported seeking legal assistance thirty percent of the time, near the average of thirty-one percent. Similarly, legal assistance rates for households with a respondent aged 30-44 or 45-60 were also near this average. In contrast, households with a respondent above age 60 reported seeking legal help over forty percent of the time.

2. What Problems Most Likely Involve Legal Help?

Problems involving family law, estates and trust, and civil rights issues were reported most likely to entail legal help. The lowest rates of assistance were in the categories of municipal and public services, health, public benefits, and housing.

Rate of legal assistance by category

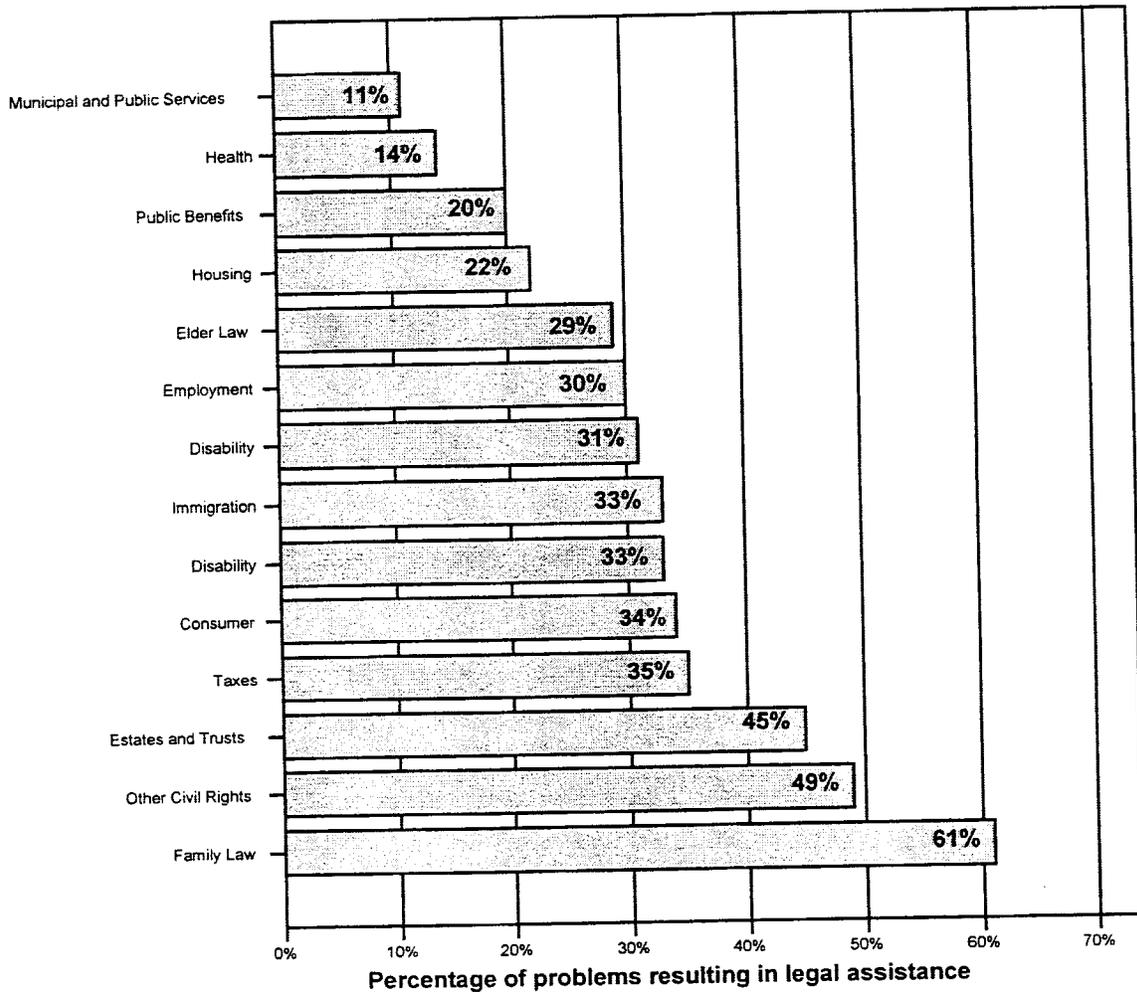


Fig. 9 Rate of legal assistance by category. For example, sixty-one percent of the reported legal problems in the family law category involved the respondent seeking help.

3. Why Do Respondents Seek or Not Seek Legal Help?

Almost seventy percent of the legal problems reported by respondents went without any form of assistance. Most respondents failed to get the help they needed because of reported concerns about costs and a sense of hopelessness. Respondents reported that they were more likely to seek help if they were aware of legal service programs such as KLS. They reported that they were more likely to seek help for problems they rated as “extremely important.” However, over ninety-three percent of problems that received no assistance were rated as “important”, “very important”, or “extremely important.”

Low income Kansans with legal needs reported they did not seek help for a number of reasons.

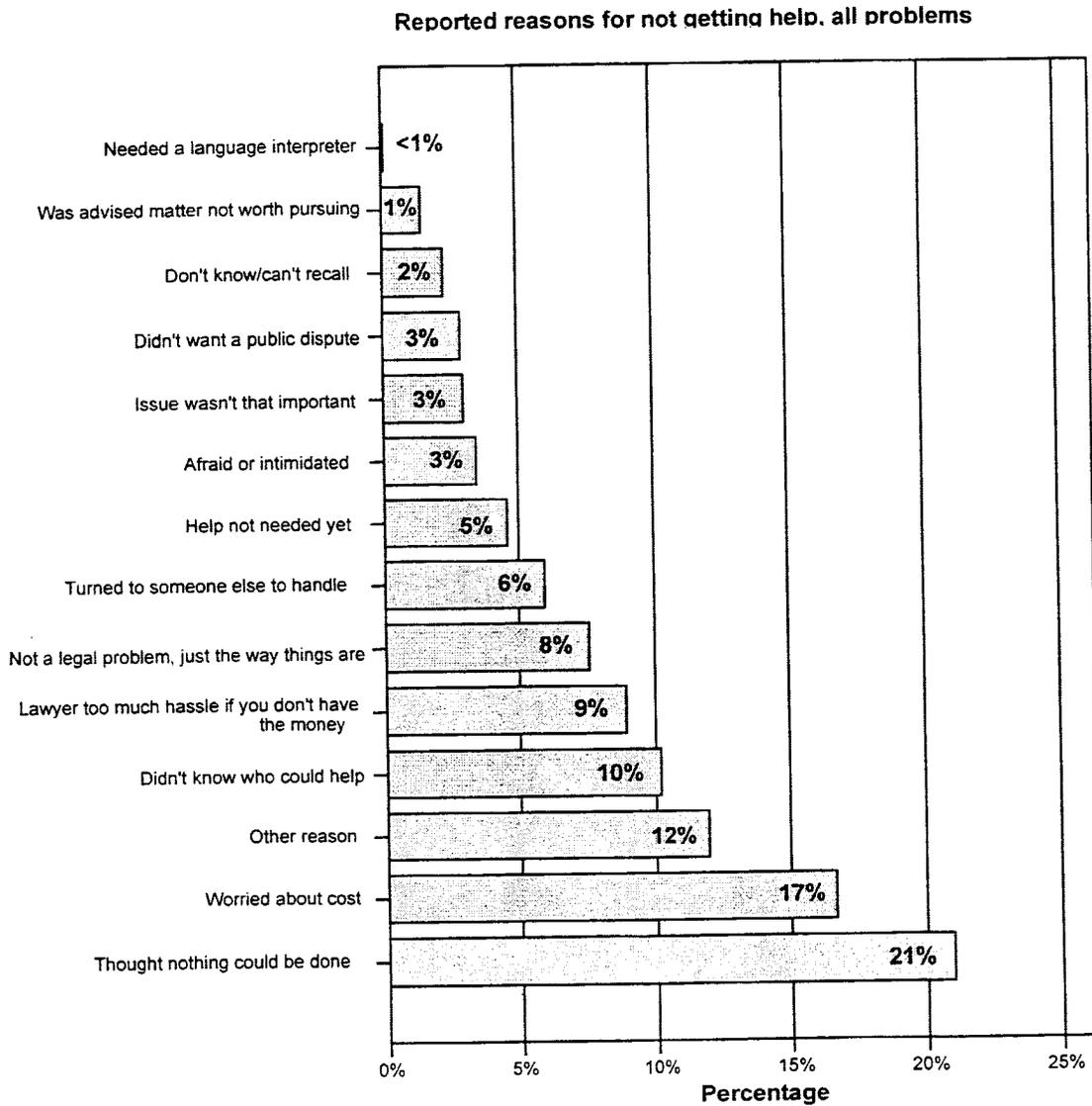


Fig. 10 Relative percentage of reported reasons for not seeking legal assistance.

Respondents reported not seeking assistance for four general reasons: 1) lack of awareness of legal resources, 2) considered the problem a low level of importance, 3) concerns about cost, and 4) a sense of hopelessness or thought “nothing could be done.”

Lack of awareness of resources: About ten percent of respondents reported a lack of awareness of aid as a barrier to seeking legal help. This is corroborated by other data in the survey. (There was an eight percent increase in awareness of legal services for situations in which respondents sought legal assistance.)

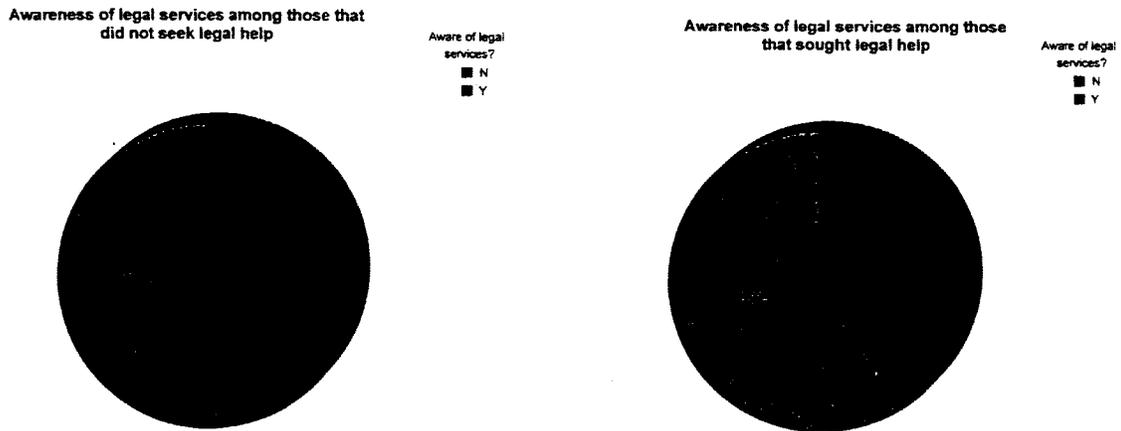


Fig. 11 Awareness of legal services among those households with respondents who did or did not seek legal help. The pie chart on the left is for those that did not seek, the one on the right for those that did.

Notwithstanding, a lack of awareness should not be overstated as an explanation why respondents did not seek help, given that fifty percent of those who did not seek help in fact did know about legal assistance programs.

Level of importance: Perceived level of importance had an effect on whether or not legal help was obtained. Two-thirds of the problems among those who sought help were rated as extremely important whereas among those who did not seek help, about half of their problems were rated as extremely important (Fig. 12 & Fig. 13). Among those who did not seek help approximately ninety-three percent of their problems were rated important, very important, or extremely important. The great majority of legal problems were not assisted despite the high level of importance assigned to them.

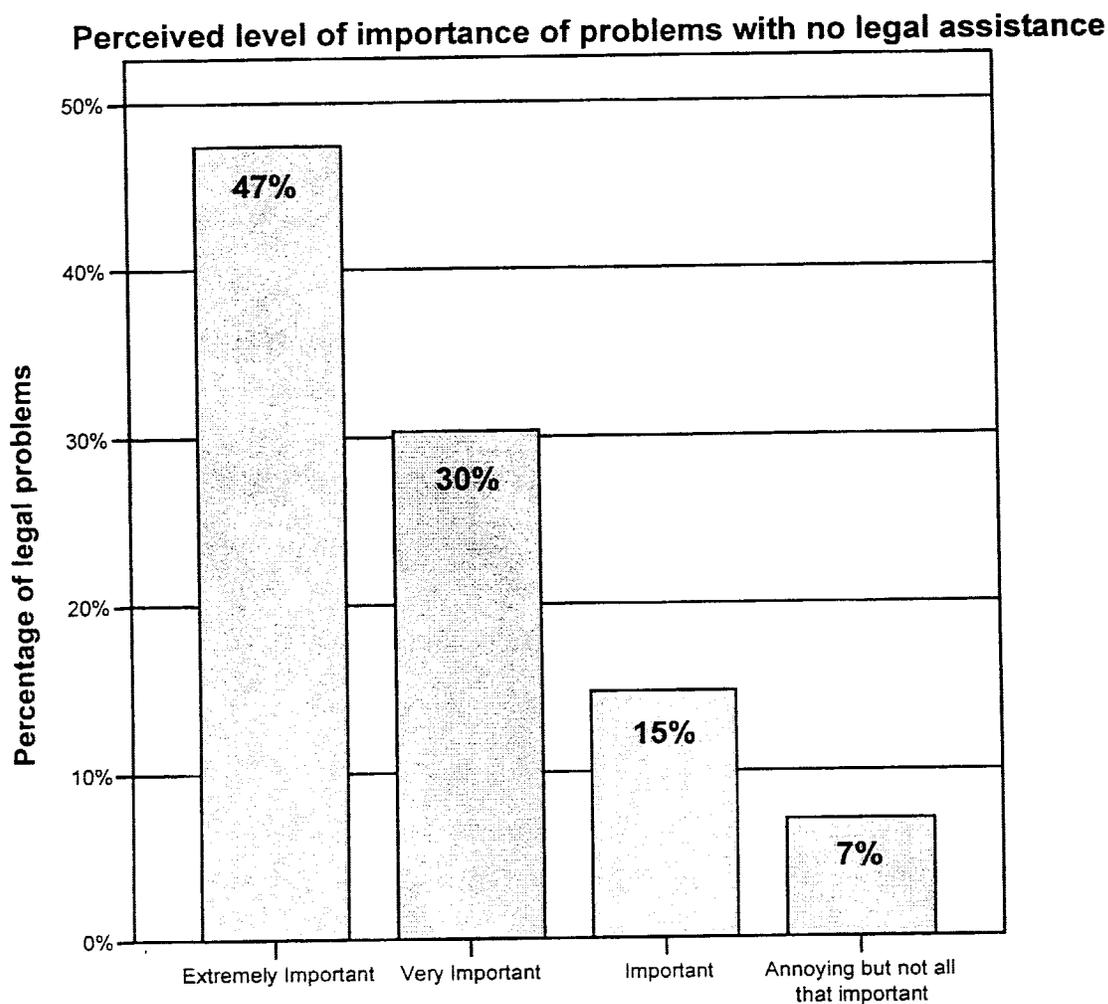


Fig. 12 Relative percentage of problems by level of importance among those in which respondents did not seek assistance. For example, forty-seven percent of the problems that involved no legal help were rated as extremely important.

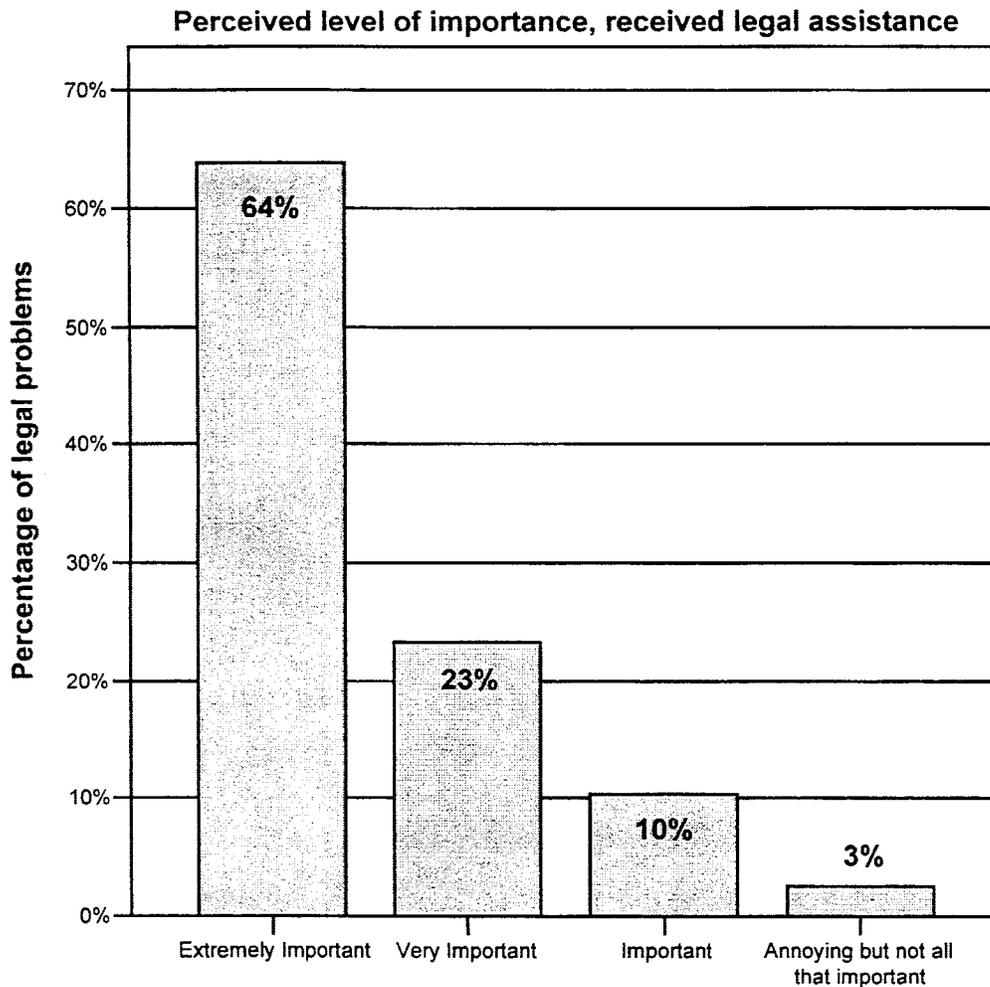


Fig. 13 Relative percentage of problems by level of importance among those in which respondents sought assistance. For example, sixty-four percent of the problems that involved legal assistance were rated as extremely important.

Concerns about cost: Respondents reported that concern about cost was a significant barrier to seeking aid. Over one in four respondents did not seek help because they reported that they could not afford an attorney or reported that paying an attorney was too great a burden.

Sense of hopelessness: Finally, respondents reported that a sense of hopelessness was a major impediment in seeking legal assistance. Over twenty percent of the respondents

reported that they thought nothing could be done, ten percent reported not knowing who could help, and about eight percent reported thinking that their legal problem was "just the way things are."

4. How Aware Are Kansans of Legal Resources?

About half of respondents reported being aware of legal service programs like KLS, the Kansas Bar Association, free services, and small claims courts. Yet, only one in three reported knowing if they were eligible for free or reduced fee services. Racial minorities and those with lower levels of education had less knowledge of legal resources. However, women reported more knowledge than men about legal resources.

Slightly over half of all respondents reported awareness of legal services programs such as KLS (Fig. 14). About half of respondents reported awareness of free legal services and small claims courts. However, less than forty percent were aware of a hotline, only one in three knew they were eligible for free or reduced fee services, and barely twenty percent knew of Internet sites with legal information.

Percent aware of legal services

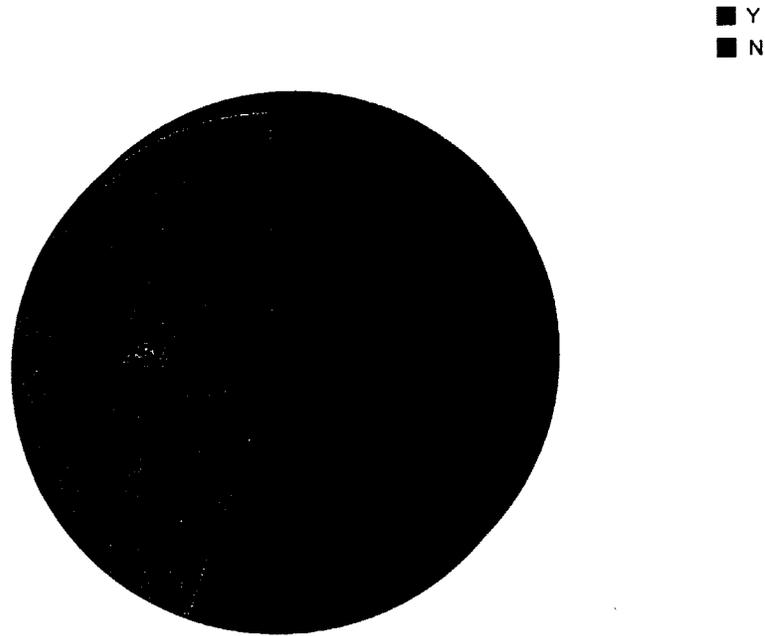


Fig. 14 Percentage of all households aware of legal service programs like KLS.

With regard to awareness of available legal services, no significant differences were seen in relation to poverty levels in respondents' reports from urban and rural areas. In both cases the responses were near average. However, awareness differed with respect to the gender of the respondent.

Gender: Households with a female respondent reported being more aware of all kinds of legal resources (Fig. 15). However, awareness of eligibility was about the same as the average for both genders.

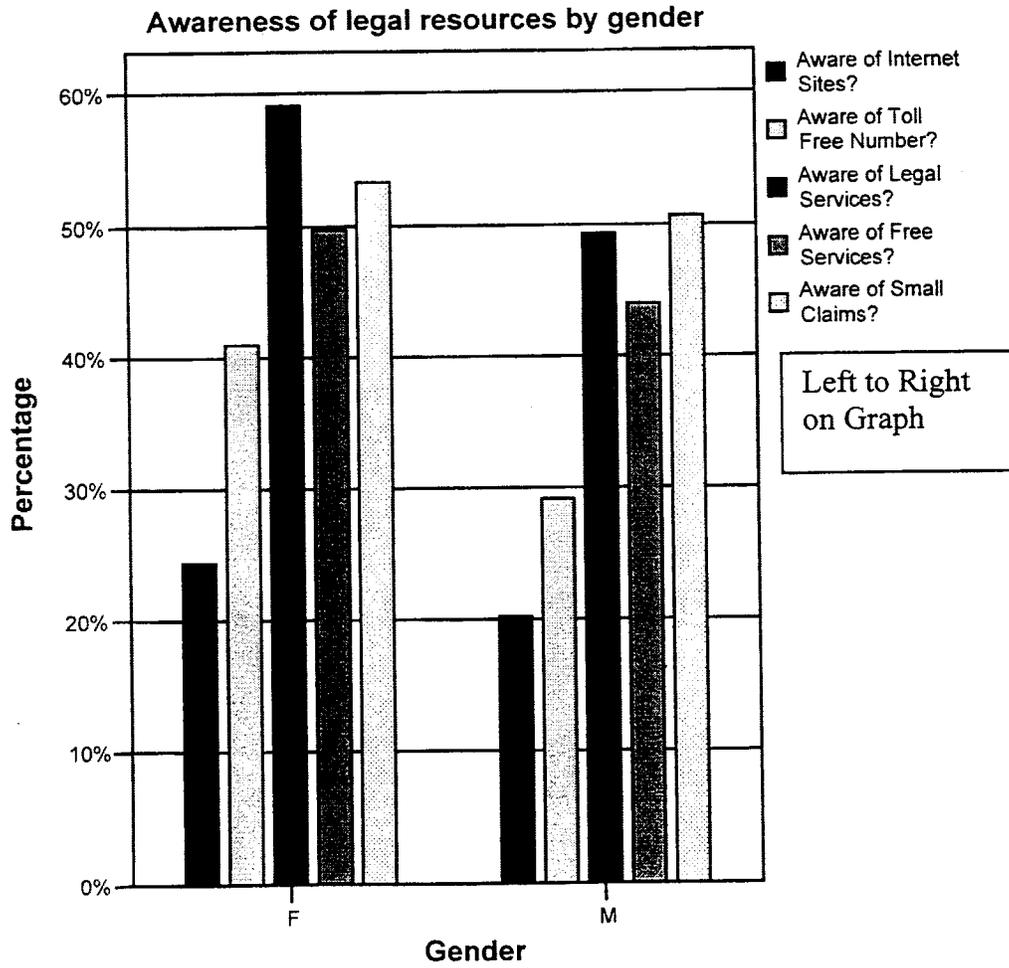


Fig. 15 Awareness of legal resources by gender.

5. Where Do People Go for Legal Assistance?

When low income Kansans seek assistance, about forty percent reported that they went to a private lawyer and about twenty percent reported that they went to Kansas Legal Services. Households reported that they most often went to KLS for situations involving public benefits, health, and other civil rights issues.

When encountering a legal problem, thirteen percent of low income households reported that they went to a private lawyer, and six percent reported that they went to Kansas Legal Services (Fig. 16).

Breakdown of legal assistance for all problems

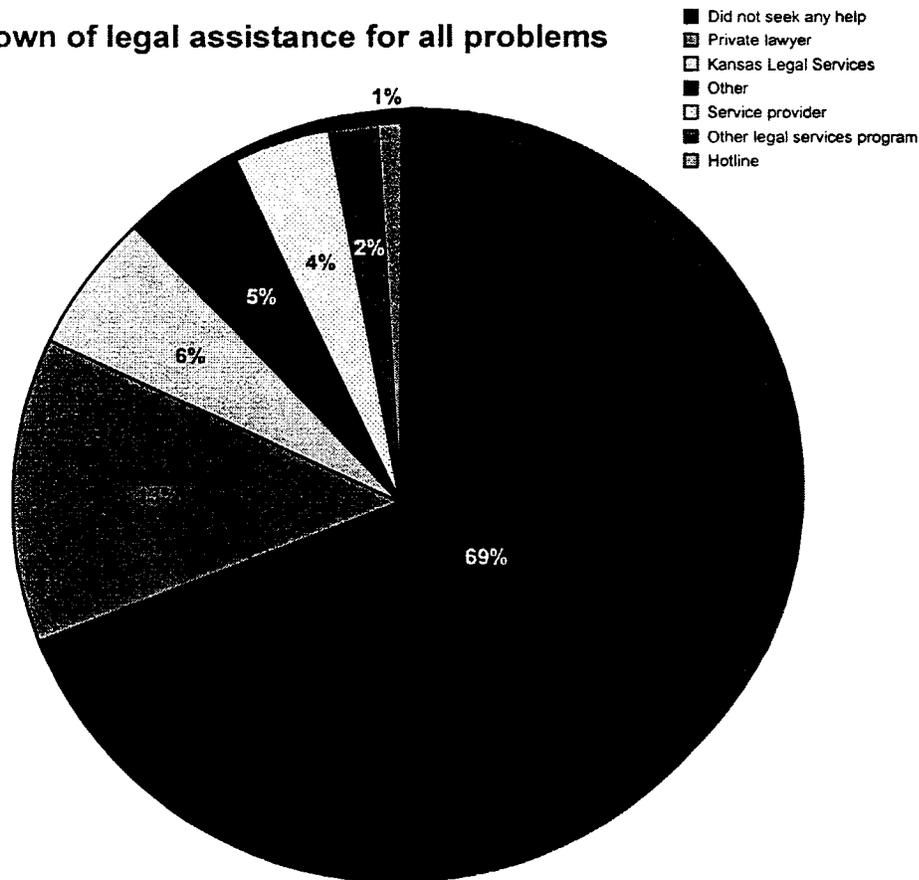


Fig. 16 Breakdown of respondent action for all legal situations. The "other" category includes various types of assistance reported by respondents, most of which were informal means such as family members or friends who may not have provided adequate direction or advice.

Among the low income households that reported seeking assistance, most respondents reported that they went to a private attorney forty percent of the time (Fig. 17). If they did not go to a private attorney, respondents reported that they were next most likely to look to Kansas Legal Services, which dealt with twenty percent of the cases.

Breakdown of legal assistance for all problems

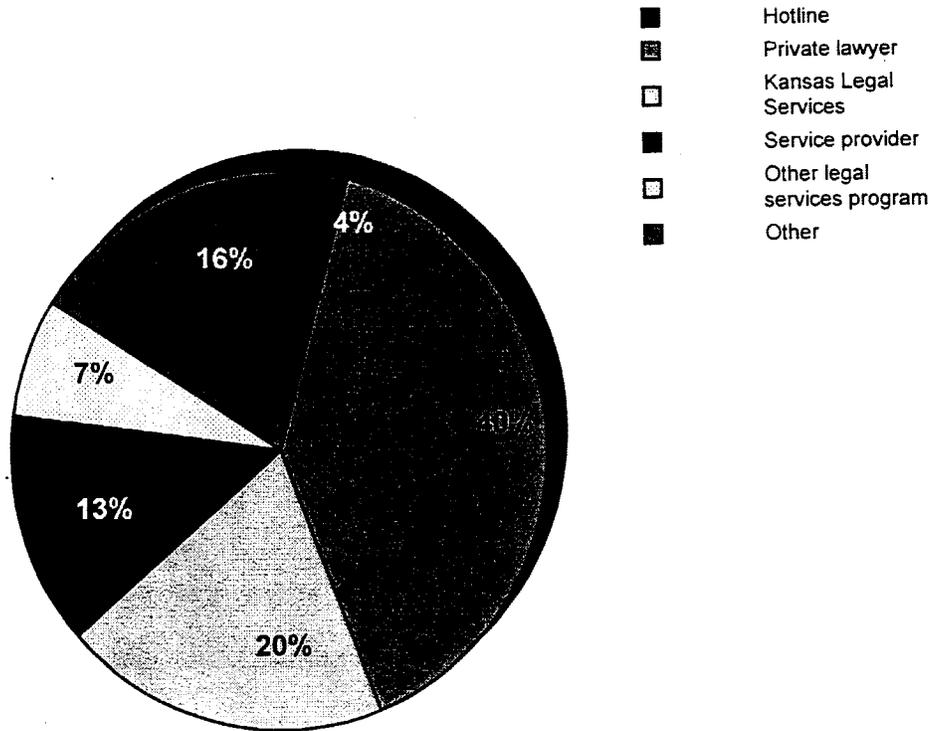


Fig. 17 Breakdown of legal help among those problems involving legal assistance. The "other" category includes various types of assistance reported by the respondents, but many were informal means such as family members or friends who may not have provided adequate legal help.

The rate of assistance by Kansas Legal Services varied according to the category of legal need (Fig. 18). Households reported that they most often went to KLS for public benefits, and health-related legal problems. Situations involving consumer issues,

employment, and municipal and public services were aided by KLS at below the average rate.

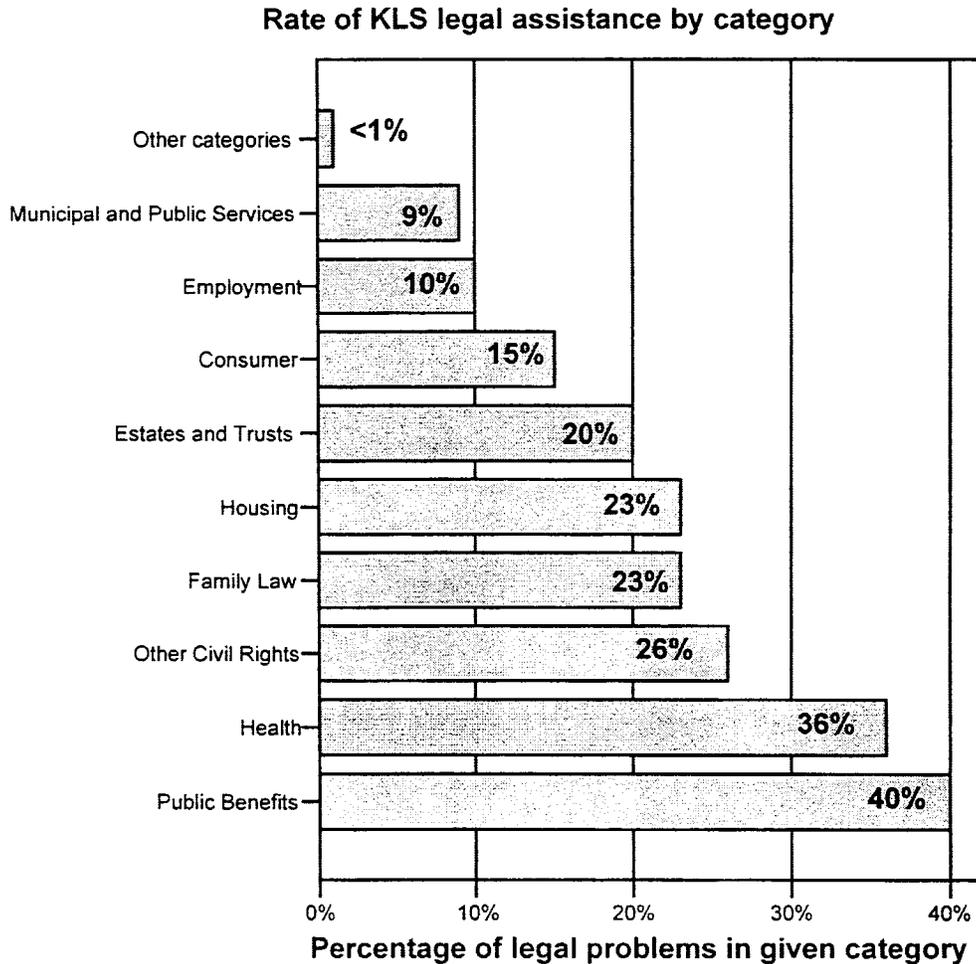


Fig. 18 Rate of legal assistance by Kansas Legal Services in given categories. For example, forty percent of the problems in the public benefits category involved help by KLS.

The kind of help respondents received differed by the rated level of importance. Among households that reported experiencing a problem they rated as extremely important, respondents sought a private lawyer in about forty percent of cases; while around one-fifth of the time they went to KLS. These percentages were roughly the same for those households who reported facing problems they rated as very important or important.

Among households that reported they experienced problems that they rated as not all that important, only fifteen percent went to a private lawyer while fifteen percent went to KLS and nearly forty percent sought assistance through a service provider. Also, a slightly greater percentage reported using a hotline for legal assistance.

6. Do Various Demographic Groups Seek the Same Form of Assistance?

Households above the poverty level were more likely to report that they sought out a private attorney. Caucasian and Hispanic-American households reported the highest percentage of legal assistance from a private lawyer, whereas African American respondents reported the lowest. African-American respondents were most likely to report that they sought the assistance through other means, such as family or friends. Respondents over 60 were much more likely than any other age group to report that they to go to KLS or seek out a private lawyer.

The breakdown of legal assistance differed according to several demographic factors:

Race or ethnicity: In general, Caucasians and Hispanic households were the most likely to report seeking private attorneys for aid. African-American respondents were least likely to report that they visit a private attorney. African-Americans respondents reported that they most likely sought assistance through other means such as family or friends.

Native American and Hispanic households reported having the lowest percentage of assistance from Kansas Legal Services. Over one-third of Native Americans and nearly one-fifth of Hispanics reported seeking help from a service provider. Both groups were more likely to go to other service providers than to KLS for assistance.

Poverty level: Households above the poverty level were more likely to seek help with a private lawyer and less likely to go to KLS. Among those households below the poverty level, around thirty-seven percent reported that they went to a private lawyer, over twenty percent reported going to Kansas Legal Services, and fourteen percent reported seeking assistance from a service provider. For households above the poverty level, forty-six percent reported going to a lawyer while fifteen percent reported going to KLS.

Age groups: Lastly, the type of legal assistance households reported receiving also varied by age. Households with respondents over 60 were much more likely to report that they went to private lawyers or KLS for their legal needs. For households with a respondent below 30 years, about one-third reported going to a private lawyer while less than a fifth reported going to KLS or a service provider. These percentages were similar to those for households with a respondent aged 30-45 and 46-60. Among households with a respondent above the age of 60, nearly three-fifths reported seeking assistance from a private lawyer, while one quarter reported going to KLS, and only five percent to a social service provider.

Breakdown of legal assistance for age below 30

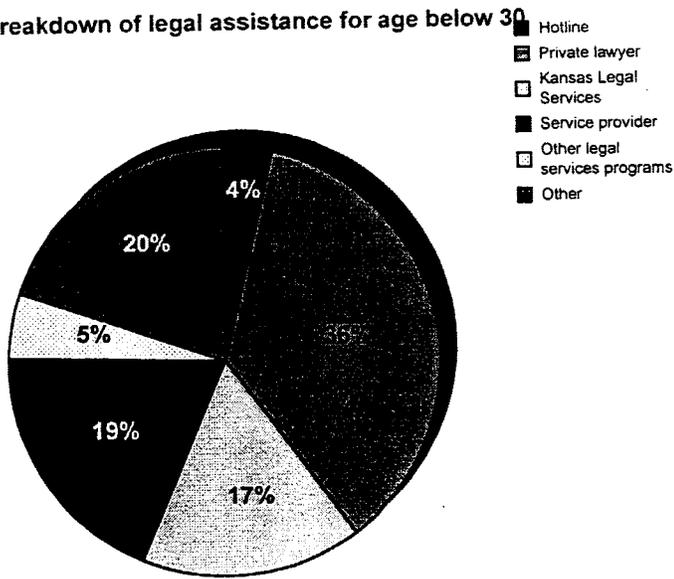


Fig. 19 Breakdown of legal help for households with a respondent below the age of 30.

Breakdown of legal assistance for age above 60

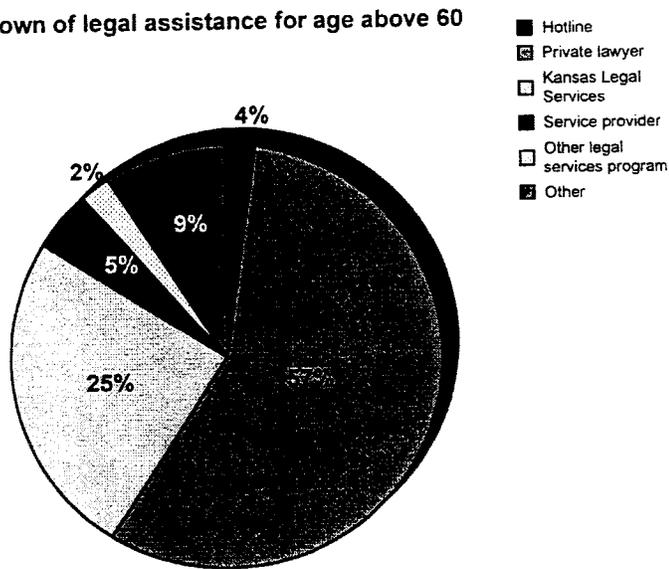


Fig. 20 Breakdown of legal help for households with a respondent above the age of 60.

7. Are Respondents Satisfied with Legal Help They Receive?

Among households that sought legal assistance, slightly less than half were satisfied with the outcome of the legal situation. KLS had a relatively high satisfaction rate for outcomes, statistically on par with private lawyers at a little less than half. Similarly, fifty-six percent of households reported being satisfied with the way KLS handled situations regardless of the outcome. The major reasons for dissatisfaction with KLS were reported to be cost-related: about forty percent thought KLS was too expensive while eighteen percent reported feeling that KLS took too long to deal with legal problems.

Among the households that sought legal help, forty-six percent of them reported being satisfied with the outcome of their problem. However, sixteen percent reported indifference and nearly thirty-eight percent reported being dissatisfied.

Respondents who reported seeking help from private lawyers reported the highest satisfaction rate regarding the outcome of the legal problem, with slightly less than fifty percent. Respondents receiving assistance from Kansas Legal Services reported a relatively high satisfaction rate; statistically identical to private lawyers at slightly less than fifty percent. Social service providers were the least likely to dissatisfy respondents yet respondents reported a relatively high rate of indifference with service providers. All other avenues of assistance had significantly lower rates of respondent satisfaction than KLS, private lawyers, or social service providers.

Although outcome satisfaction levels of KLS-assisted problems were reported to be about forty-eight percent, respondents reported satisfaction fifty-six percent of the time with KLS's work regardless of the outcome. In fact, nearly one-third of those who received assistance from KLS reported being very satisfied. Approximately one-third of respondents reported being dissatisfied with KLS. However, it should be noted that the dissatisfaction category included fifteen percent of respondents who were simply denied service.

Lastly, the needs assessment also recorded the reasons for dissatisfaction with KLS among respondents. Most of the reasons were reported to be cost-related. Among the households that reported seeking legal help through KLS and reported being dissatisfied, approximately forty percent considered KLS “too expensive” while eighteen percent thought KLS took too long to deal with the legal situations. Another fifteen percent were simply denied service. All three of these responses were directly tied to the overall financial resources that KLS has available. In only three percent of all cases did respondents report dissatisfaction because of unfriendly service or personal conflicts.

Reasons for dissatisfaction with KLS

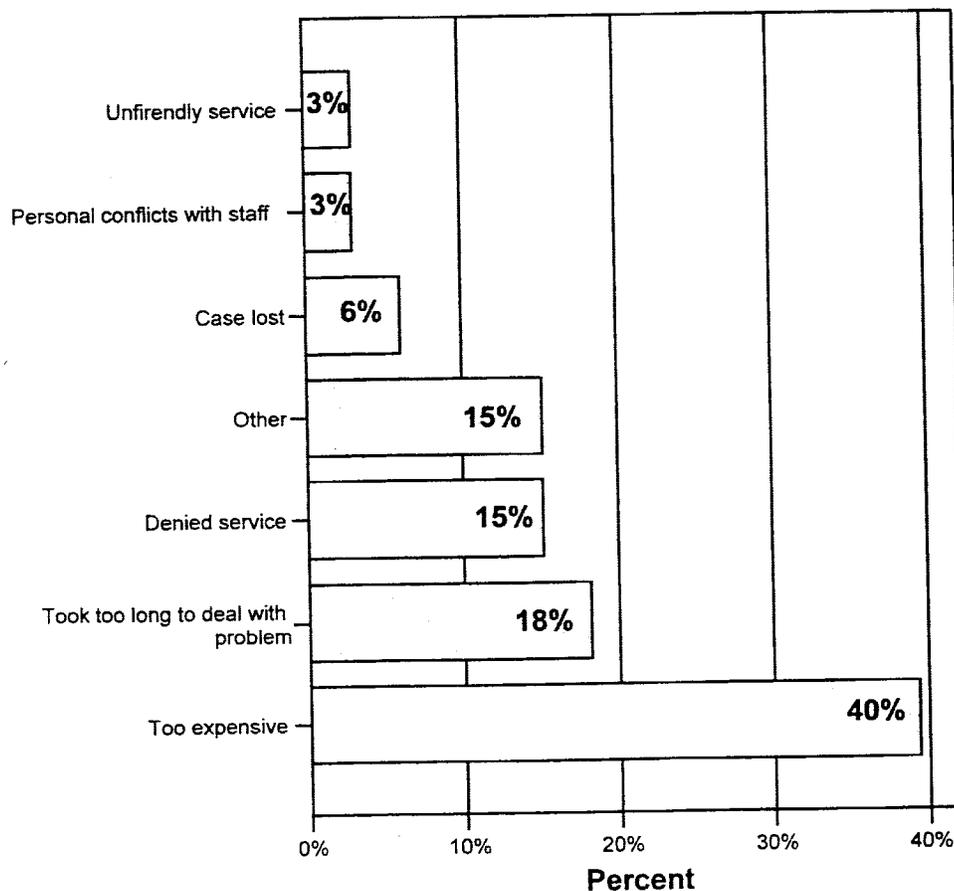
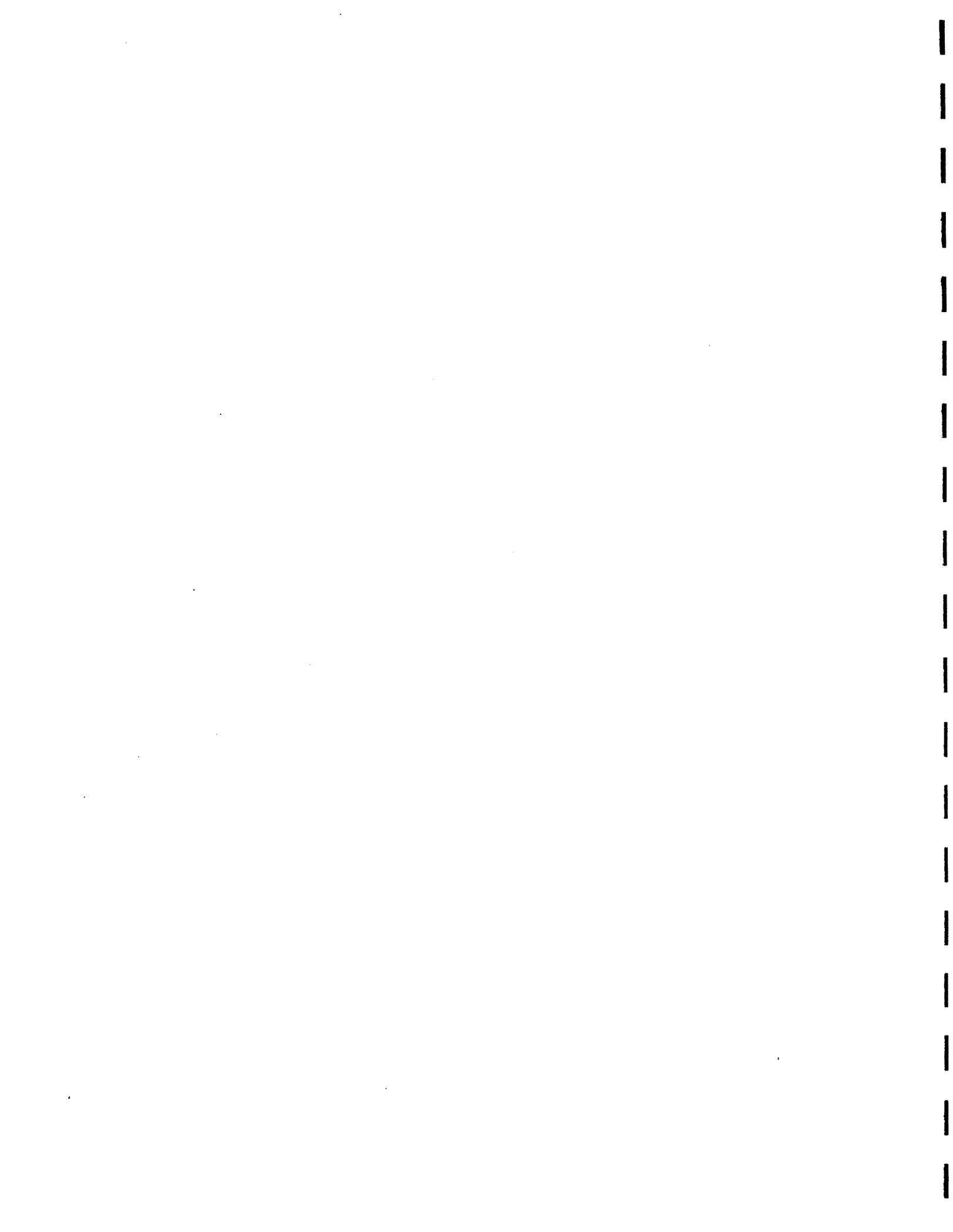


Fig. 21 Reasons for dissatisfaction with KLS.



VI. Conclusion

The service providers interviewed strongly agreed that inadequate funding is the most substantial problem preventing adequate provision of free and low cost legal services to low income Kansans. Service providers also cited low public awareness regarding current resources and potential legal remedies as a problem that prevents many low income Kansas from seeking or obtaining the legal services they need. Undocumented workers and immigrants were identified by the service providers interviewed as the group of low income Kansans least likely to receive the legal assistance they need. The reasons cited for this problem were lack of funding, federal restrictions on Kansas Legal Services preventing service to this group, and inadequate public education regarding available resources.

Service providers identified expansion of service availability in family law cases, particularly domestic violence, as the most important need because clients facing these problems are often debilitated until these situations are resolved.

Recommendations

Kansas Legal Services, the Equal Access to Justice Committee, and the community of poverty advocates in Kansas should work together to identify ways that funding for direct legal assistance to low income Kansans can be expanded. These entities should also work to raise awareness regarding the availability of legal assistance. Public education should be targeted to the immigrant population and those with domestic violence and other family law problems.

Survey results indicated that nearly 80 percent of low income Kansas households reported facing one or more legal problems per year with an average of 3.4 legal problems per household. Over two-thirds of those households reported that they did not seek any form of assistance despite the fact that ninety-three percent of the unmet problems were self-identified as “extremely important”, “very important” or “important.”

When these survey results are extrapolated to the total population of Kansas, the scale of the unmet legal needs becomes clear. Approximately 30 percent of the 2,688,418 persons in Kansas have household incomes under 300 percent of the federal poverty level (U.S. Census, 2000), or approximately 800,000 persons. Of those, approximately 80 percent have one or more legal problem a year. If over two thirds of those 645,000 persons in Kansas do not get help for their legal needs, that amounts to approximately 425,000 low income persons in Kansas who have unmet legal needs in a given year. In 2004, Kansas Legal Services served approximately 30,000 Kansans, which is approximately 8 percent of the low income persons in Kansas with legal needs.

The legal problems most commonly reported by low income Kansans involved issues of housing, consumer problems, and family law. Approximately one in three low income families reported experiencing a legal problem in each of these areas during a one year period. Kansas Legal Services, the Kansas Bar Association, the Office of Judicial Administration, the Equal Access to Justice Committee, and the poverty advocacy community as a whole should work together to focus and expand resources needed to address legal needs in these critical areas.

Over forty percent of all households surveyed reported experiencing some form of discrimination, primarily related to employment, policing and healthcare. Kansas Legal Services and other stakeholders in the legal services community should work closely with the Kansas Human Rights Commission and others to understand the nature of these problems and to obtain the resources to address them.

Individuals in households below the poverty level reported experiencing a higher number of legal problems than did those persons with incomes between the poverty level and 300 percent of poverty. Respondents who were homeless reported experiencing a much higher rate of legal problems than did other low income households. Females and ethnic minorities reported experiencing more legal problems than did males and Caucasians. These particular demographic groups more often tend to be poor than other groups and

among the poor, tend to experience legal problems more often. Outreach, public education and resources should be focused and directed toward those in greatest need.

Although younger people more often reported experiencing legal problems than did seniors, respondents over sixty were much more likely to report seeking assistance with the problems they experienced. The finding that low income households reported seeking legal help for less than one-third of their legal problems presents a great challenge to the legal services and poverty advocacy community in Kansas. Respondents were much more likely to report seeking assistance with a family law matter than they were with a housing matter, for example. This indicates a need for expanded resources and public information about housing law and legal remedies related to housing issues.

Similarly, low income respondents were more likely to report seeking legal assistance in civil rights matters than they were with issues related to public benefits. However, among those who reported seeking assistance from Kansas Legal Services, public benefits and health were among the most common legal problems for which help was sought. This may be due in part to the emphasis placed upon social security disability advocacy for cash assistance recipients and children as a result of long-term contracts with the Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services. This appears to be an area of relatively successful outreach and service provision.

About half of the low income persons served either by private attorneys or Kansas Legal Services reported being satisfied with the outcomes obtained as a result of legal advice or representation. In this regard Kansas Legal Services is doing about as well in satisfying its customers with positive outcomes as is the private bar.

The most common reason reported for dissatisfaction with Kansas Legal Services was a perception that the service is "too expensive." Forty percent of those reported as dissatisfied cited expense as their reason for dissatisfaction. Kansas Legal Services has expanded its participation in the Kansas Bar Association's Low Fee Program in recent years. Extensive advertising has made low income people aware of the costs of legal

representation under the Low Fee Program. The level of dissatisfaction on this issue presents a dilemma. The Low Fee Program was designed to expand the availability of service to those who otherwise would go unserved, yet was cited as the most common reason for dissatisfaction with Kansas Legal Services. This issue requires careful analysis. An emphasis on advertising the availability of free services may help with public perception.

This study, in its current form, is useful in identifying areas of unmet need, the need for additional resources and perceived dissatisfactions with the current service network. Kansas Legal Services, the Kansas Bar Association, the Equal Access to Justice Committee, the Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence, the Office of Judicial Administration and a variety of other stakeholders should work collaboratively to obtain adequate resources, develop and present additional public information to raise awareness, and coordinate services to make the best use of limited resources. Success in that endeavor requires an ongoing effort in dialogue and collaboration. No one entity is capable of meeting all of the legal needs of low income Kansans given the state of current resources. By working together, all of the stakeholders cited above and others may make meaningful steps toward expanding resources, improving the quality of services, and promoting the availability of legal assistance to low income Kansans.

Appendix A: Selected Tables

The series of graphs that follow delineate the number and relative percentage of legal problems reported within legal problem categories (Fig. 1-4). (See Appendix G for a list of definitions.)

Number and relative percentage of legal problems: Housing

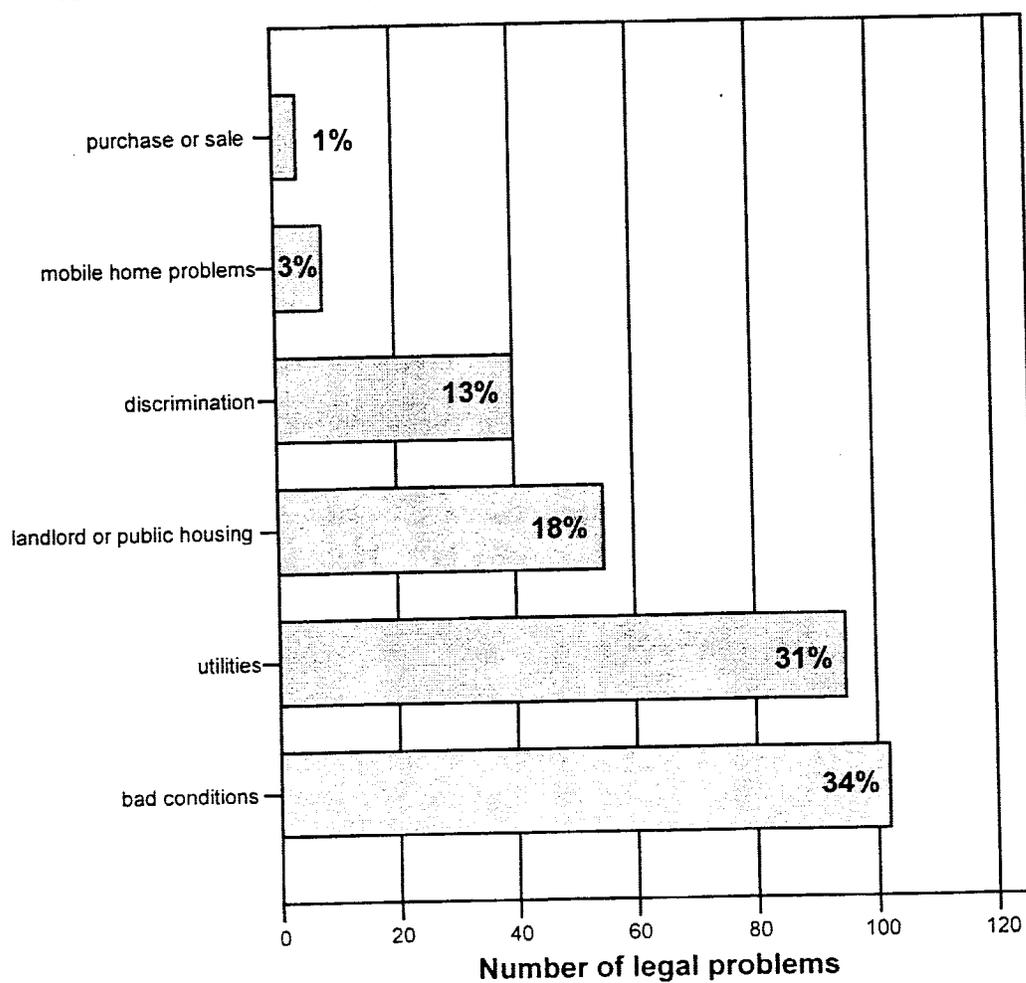


Fig. 1 Number and relative percentage of legal problems within the category of housing issues.

Number and relative percentage of legal problems: Health

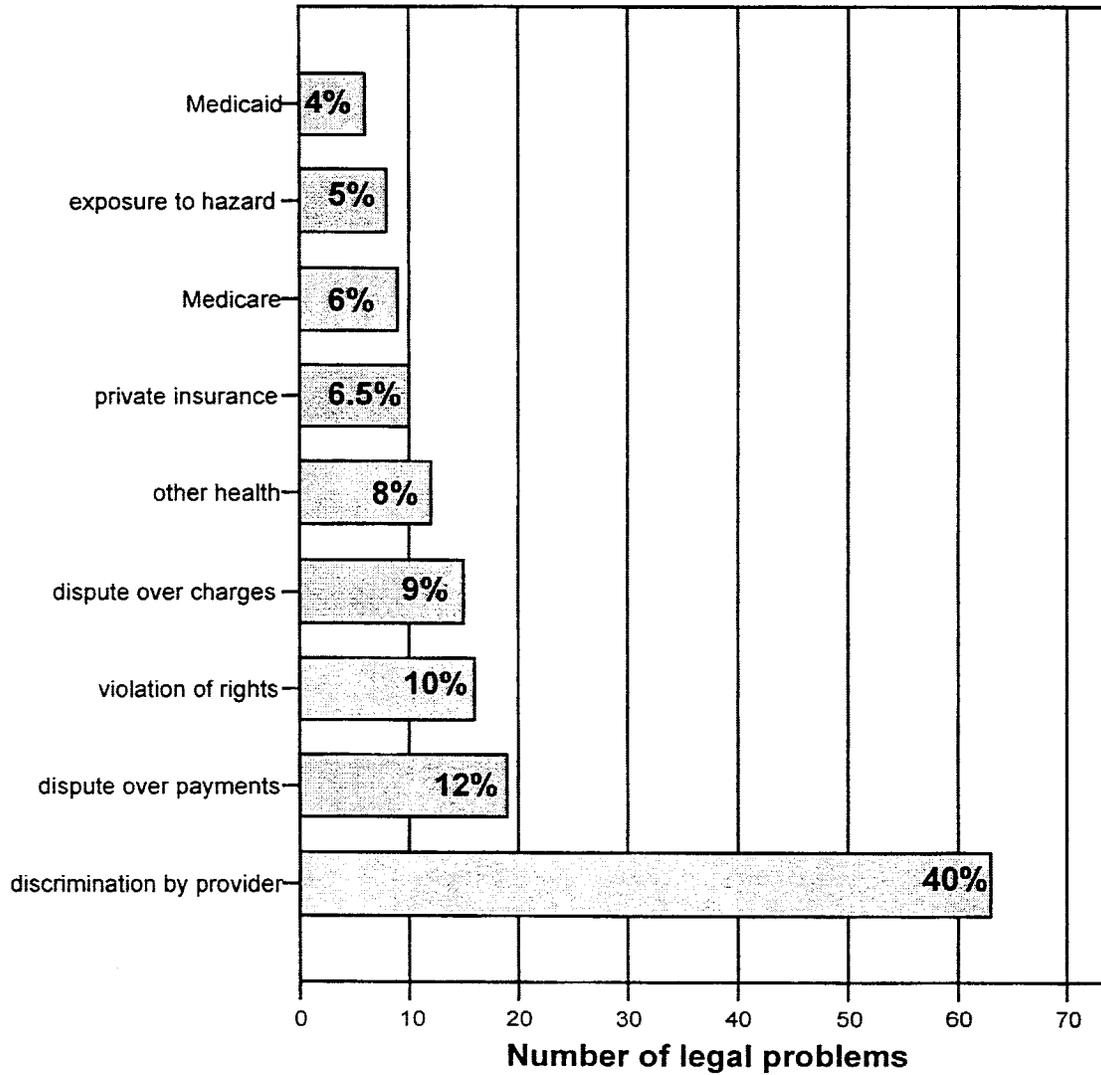


Fig. 2 Number and relative percentage of legal problems within the category of health issues.

Number and relative percentage of legal problems: Estates and Trusts

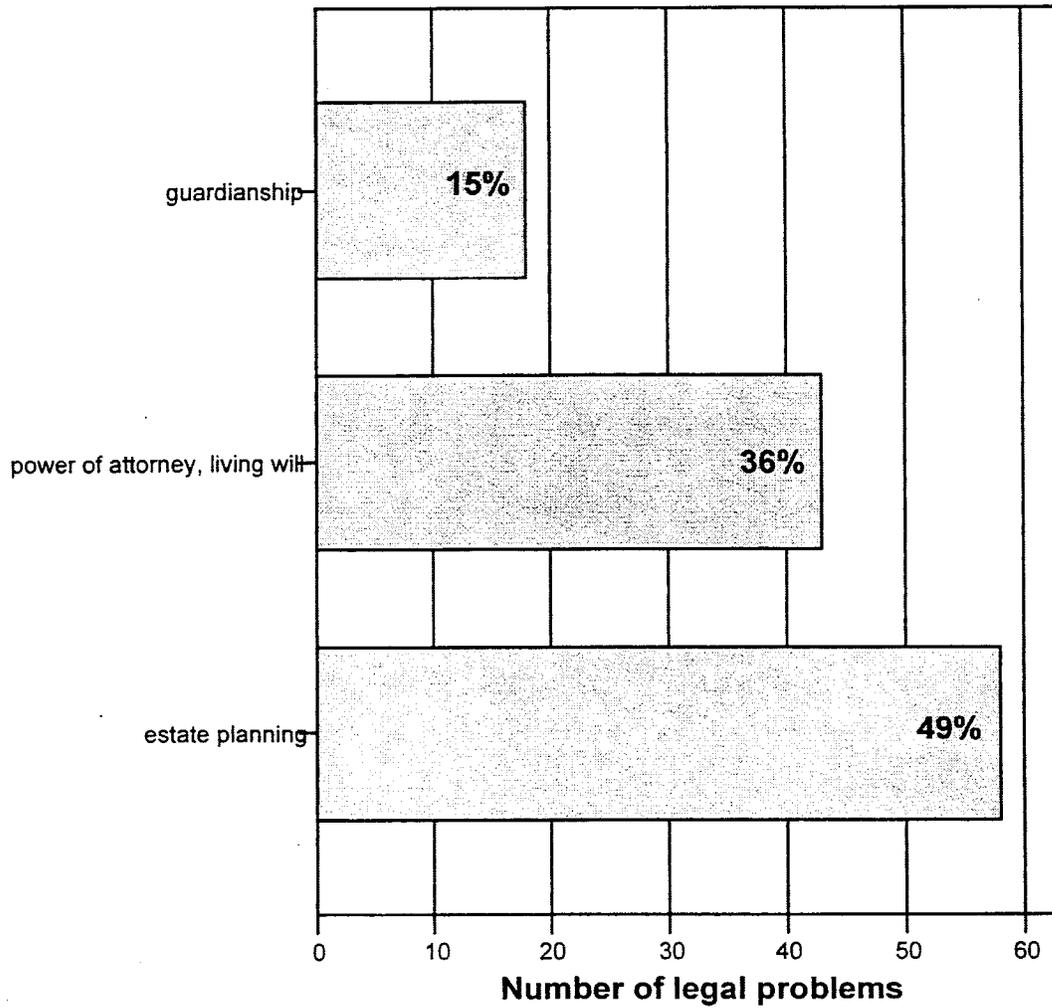


Fig. 3 Number and relative percentage of legal problems within the category of estates and trusts.

Number and relative percentage of legal problems: Other Civil Rights

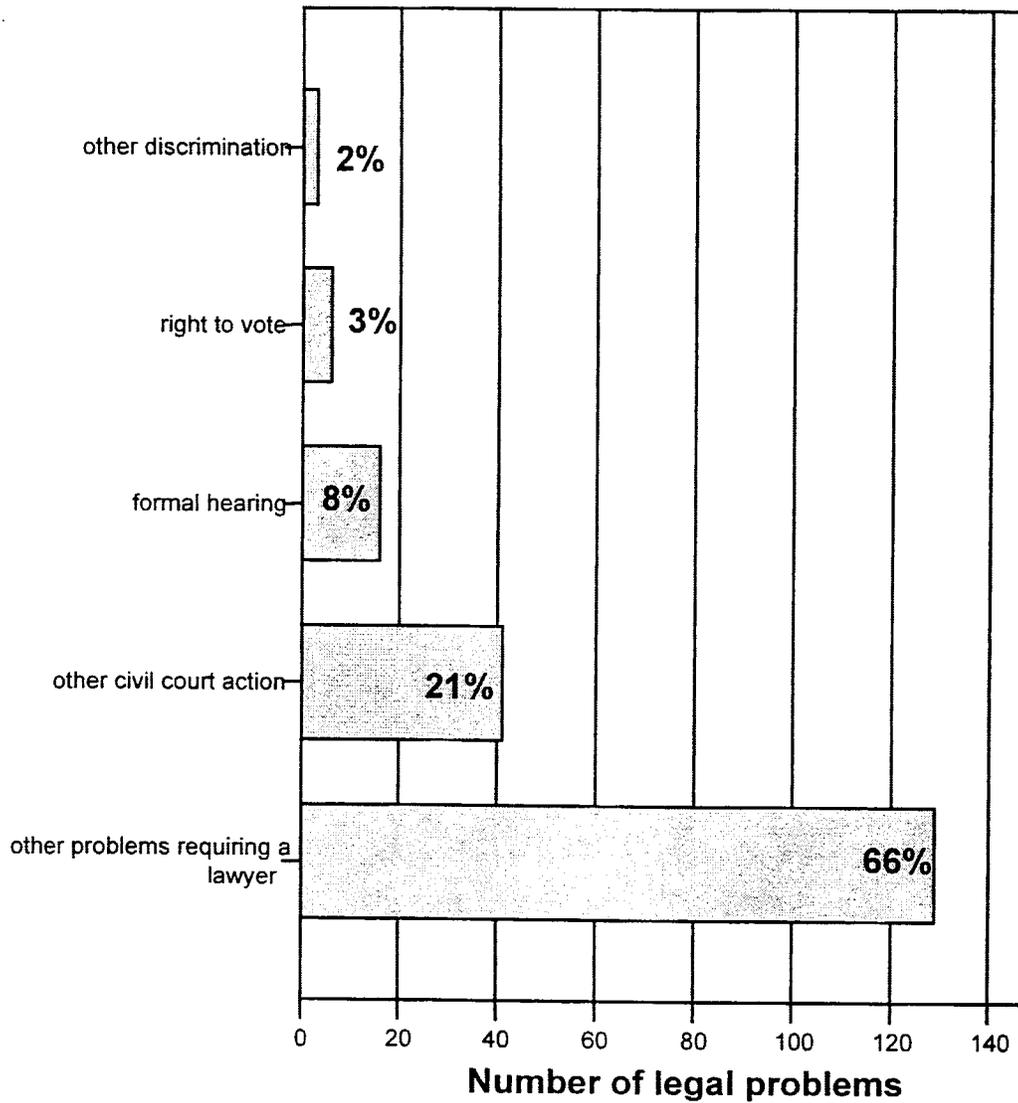


Fig. 4 Number and relative percentage of legal problems within the category of other civil rights.

Appendix B: Legal Need by KLS Office

The series of graphs that follow delineate the number and relative percentage of legal needs for various KLS office regions (Fig. 1-12). For example, eighteen percent of the legal problems reported in Dodge City involved employment issues.

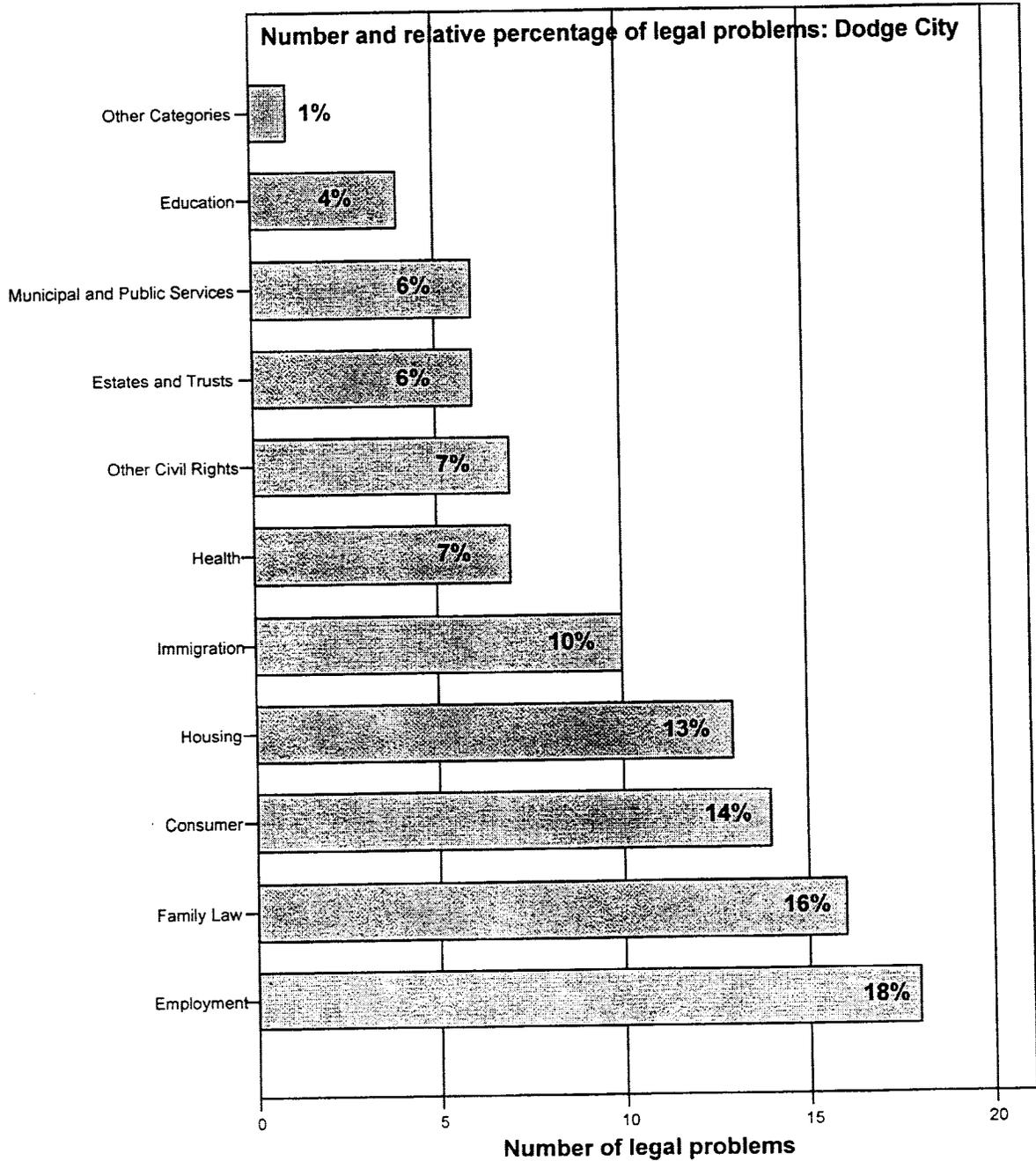


Fig. 1 Number and relative percentage of legal problems: Dodge City.

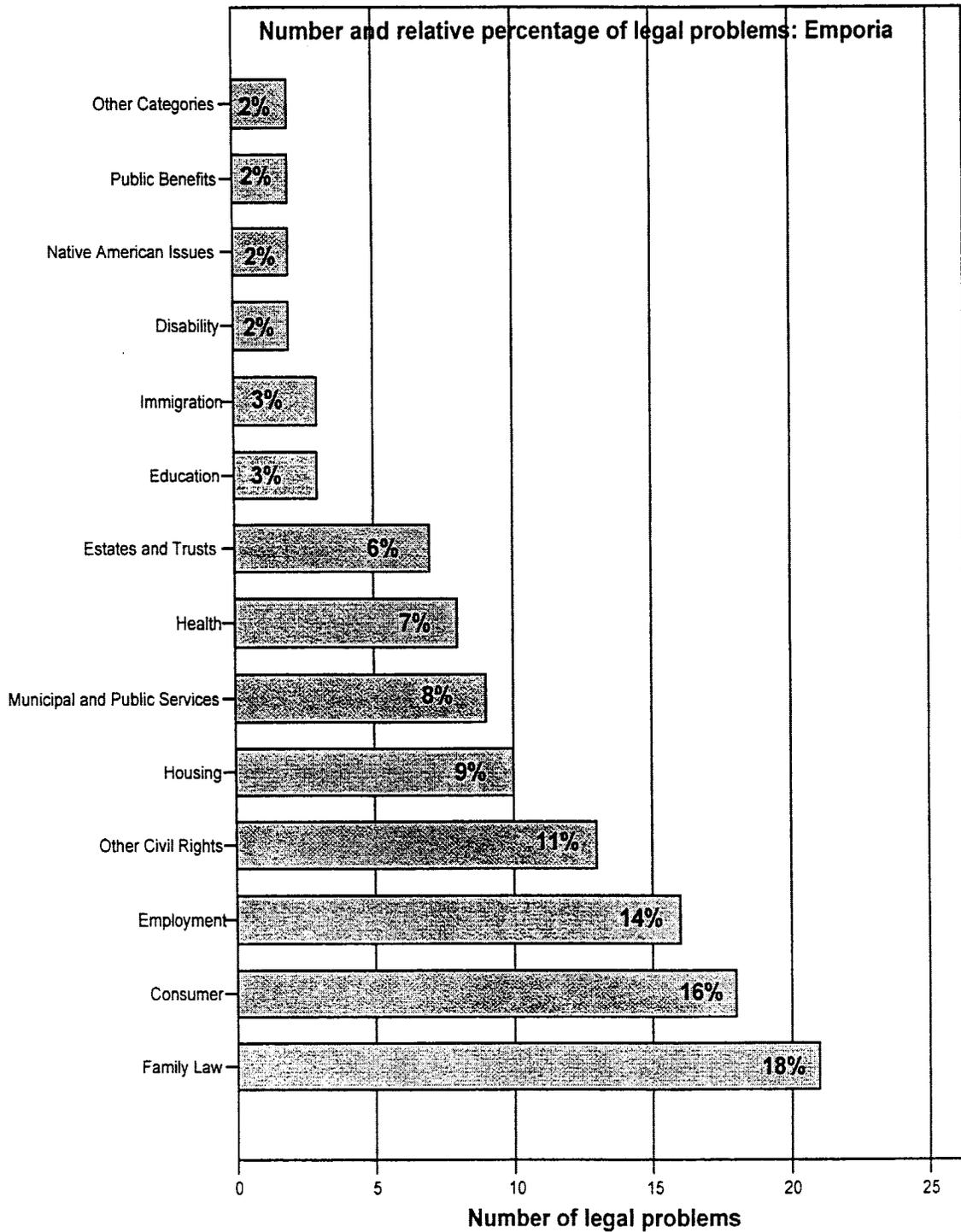


Fig. 2 Number and relative percentage of legal problems: Emporia.

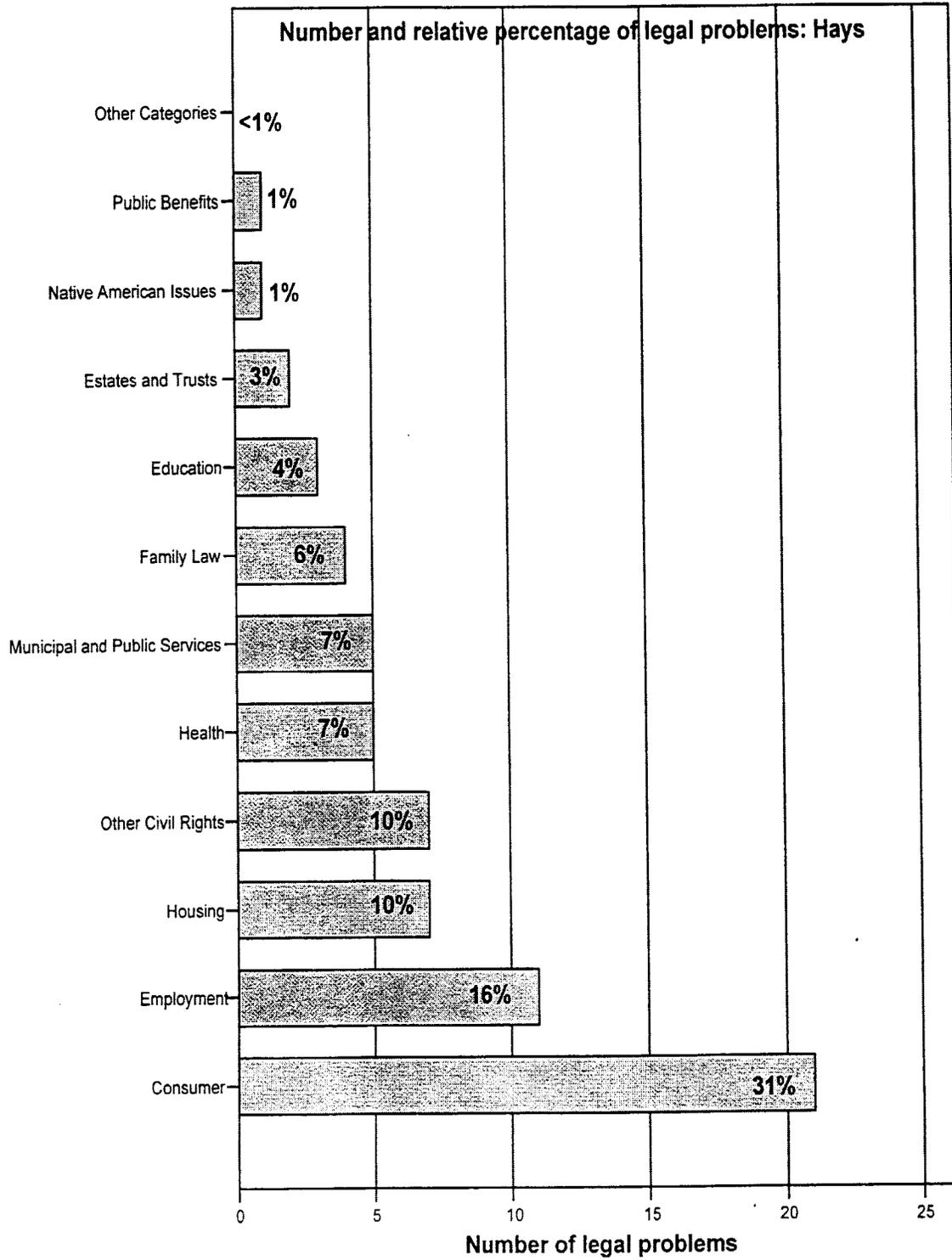


Fig. 3 Number and relative percentage of legal problems: Hays.

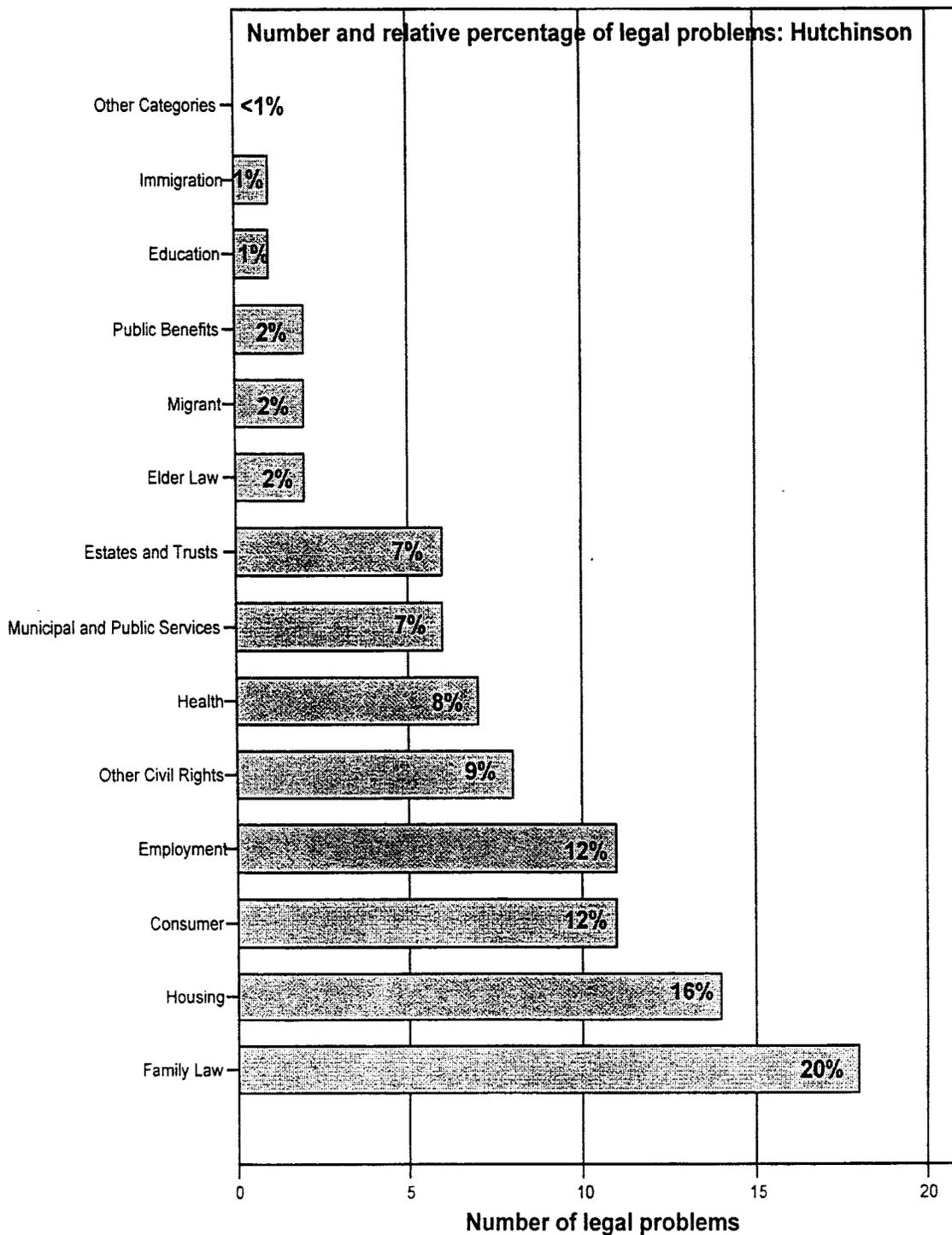


Fig. 4 Number and relative percentage of legal problems: Hutchinson.

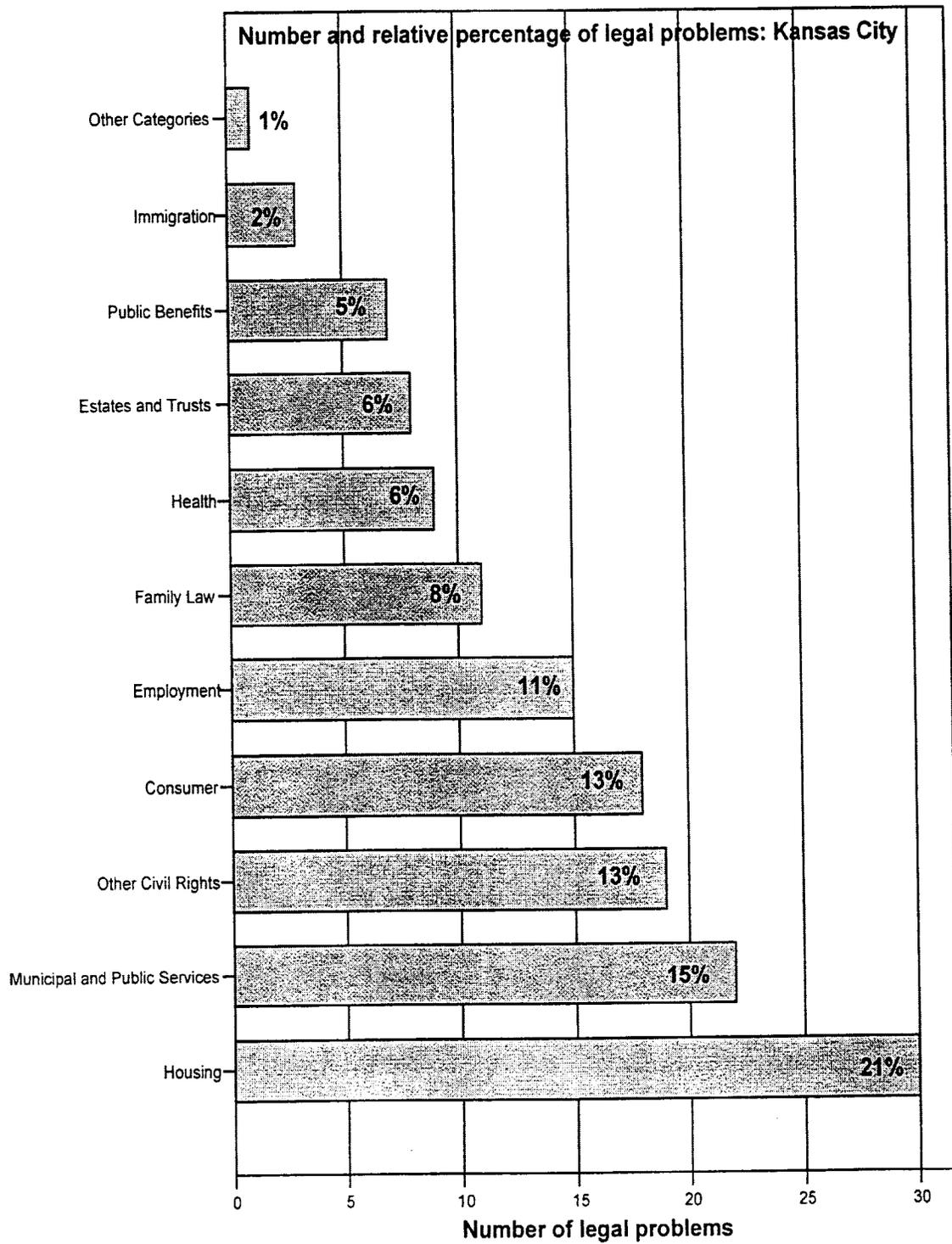


Fig. 5 Number and relative percentage of legal problems: Kansas City.

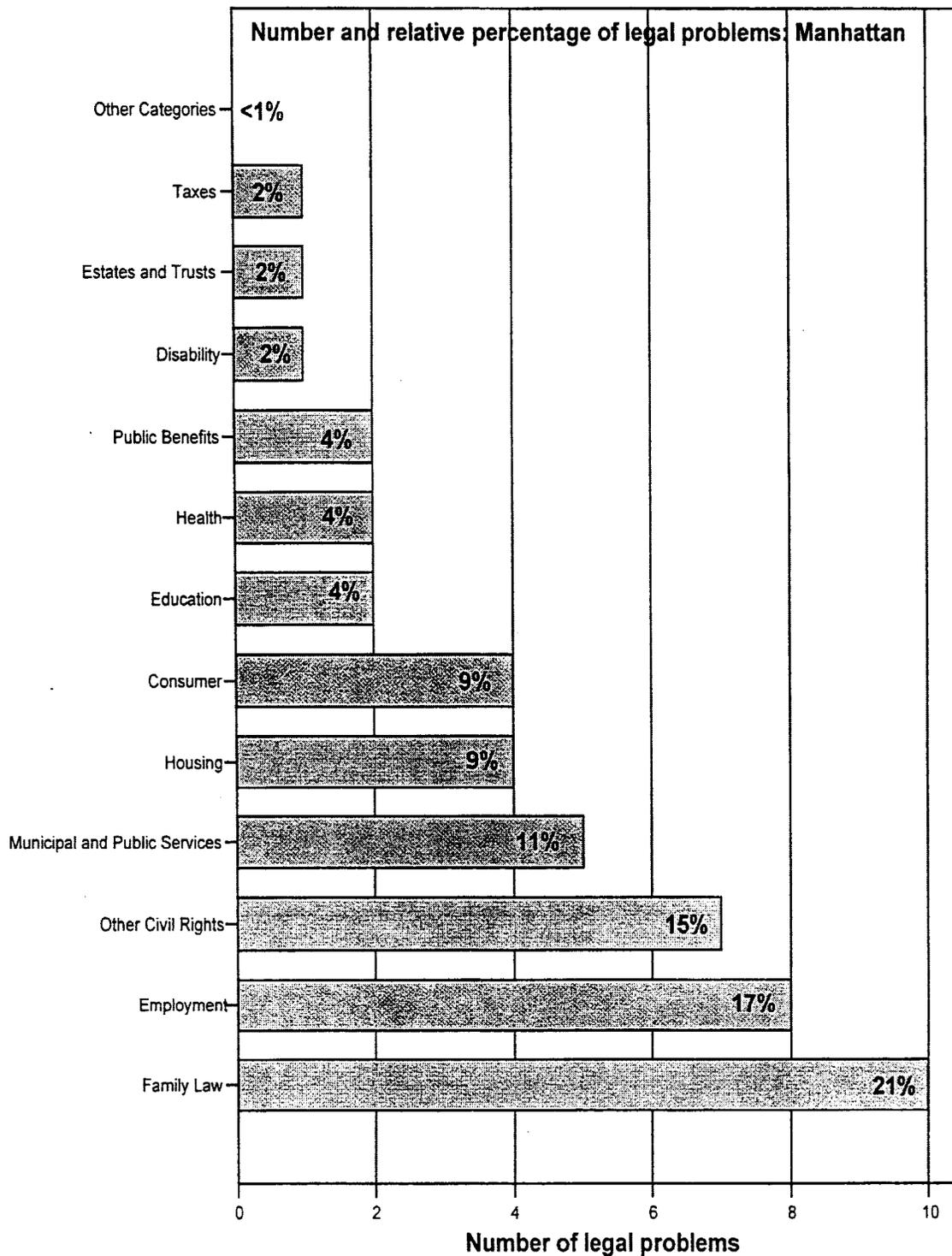


Fig. 6 Number and relative percentage of legal problems: Manhattan.

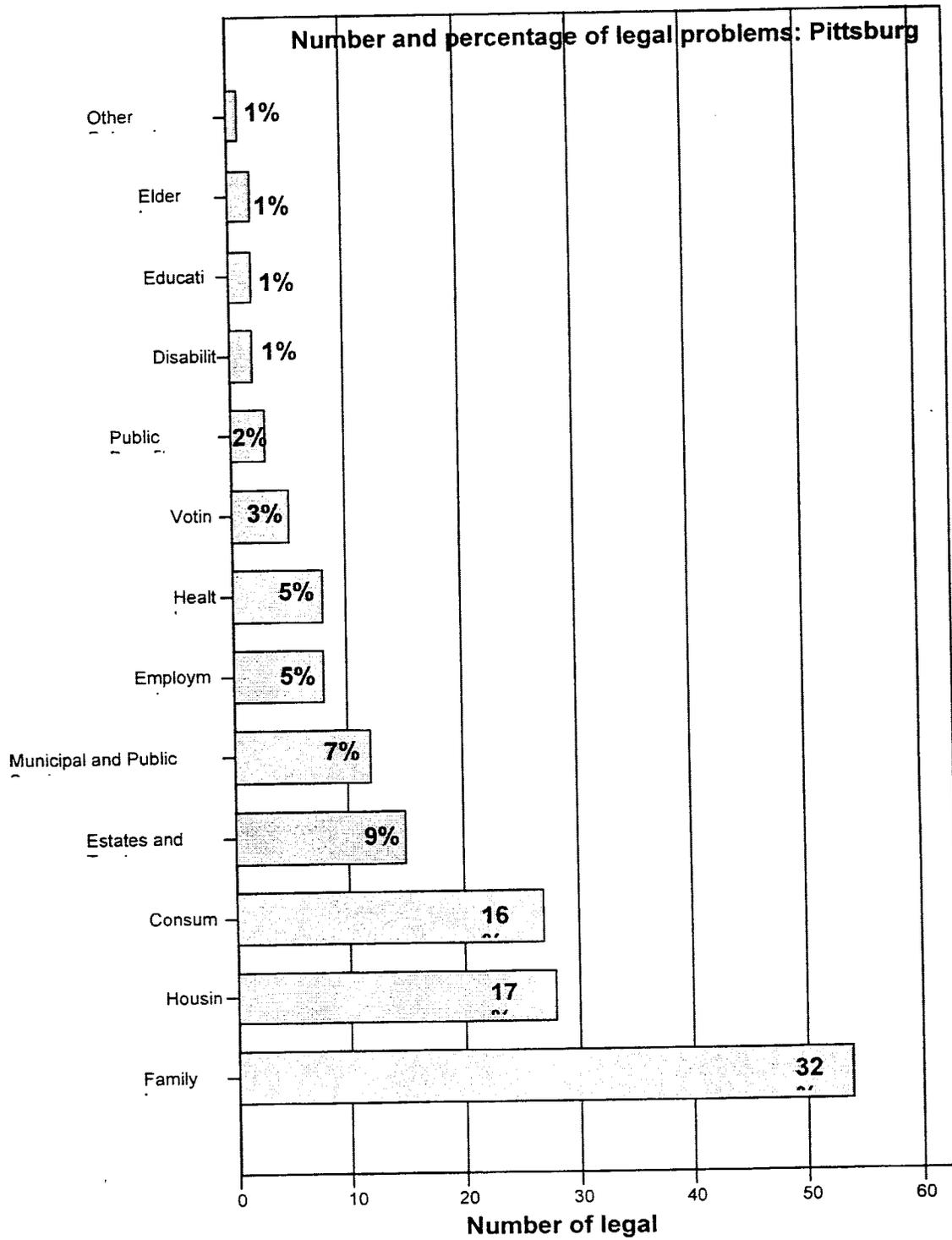


Fig. 7 Number and relative percentage of legal problems: Pittsburg.

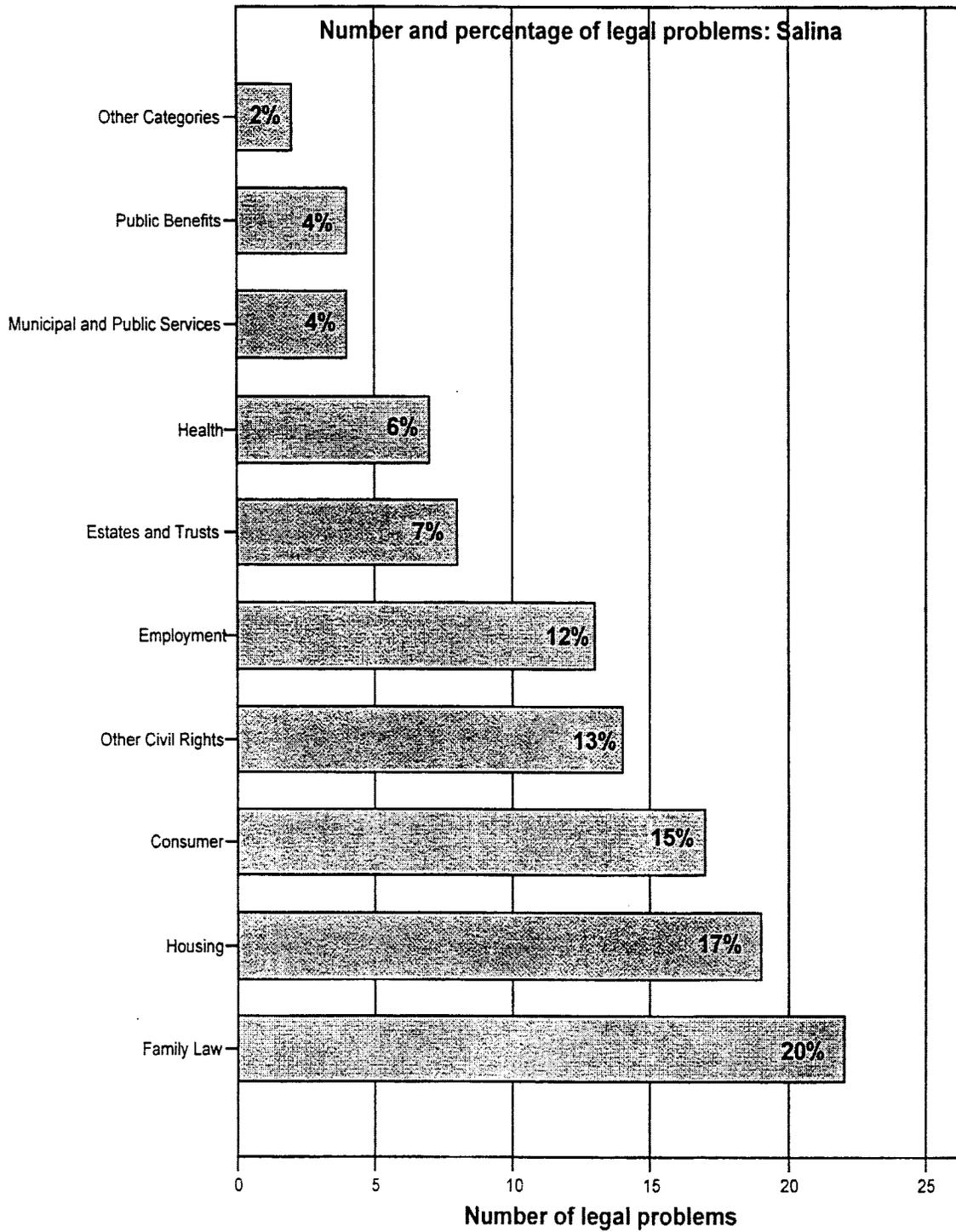


Fig. 8 Number and relative percentage of legal problems: Salina.

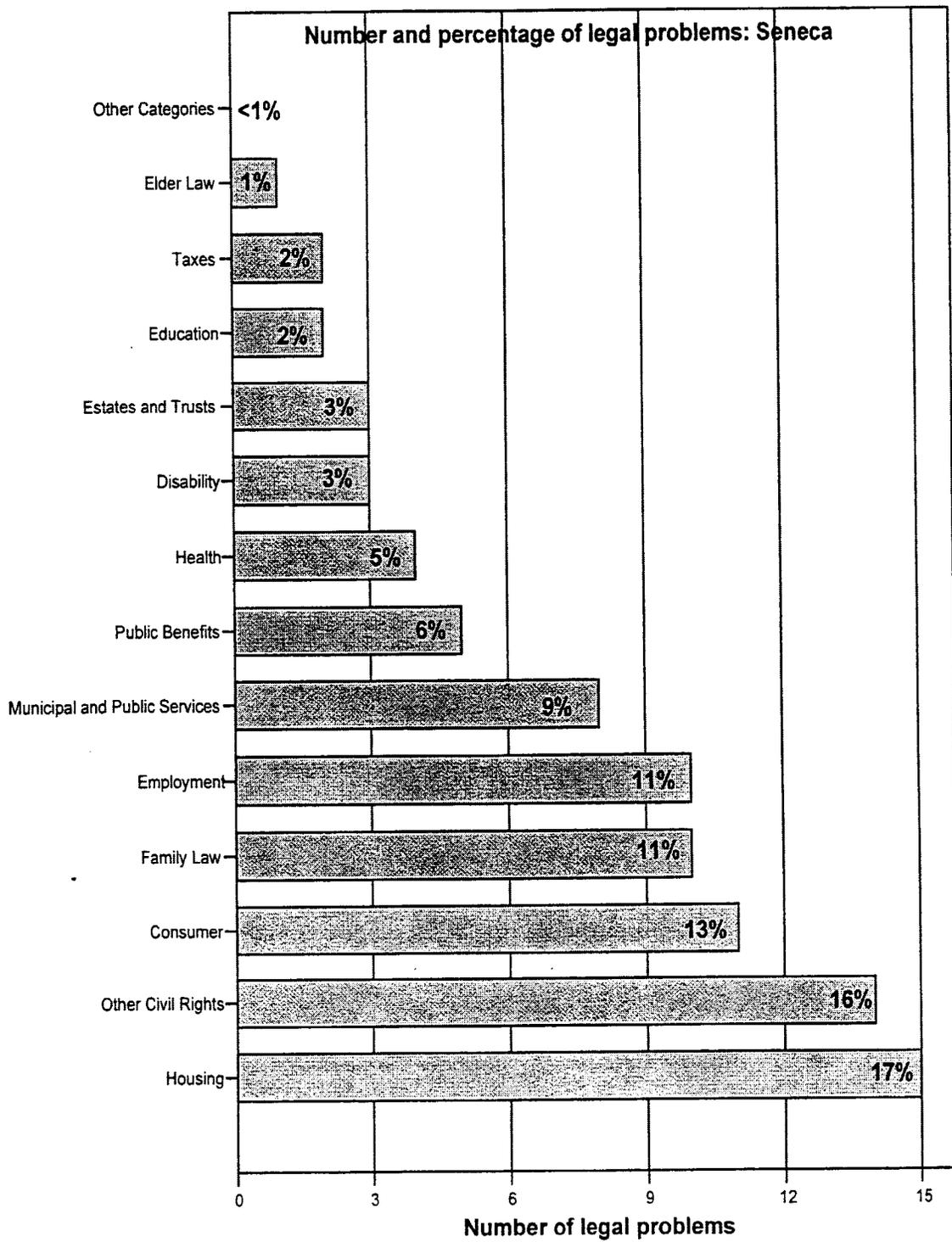


Fig. 9 Number and relative percentage of legal problems: Seneca.

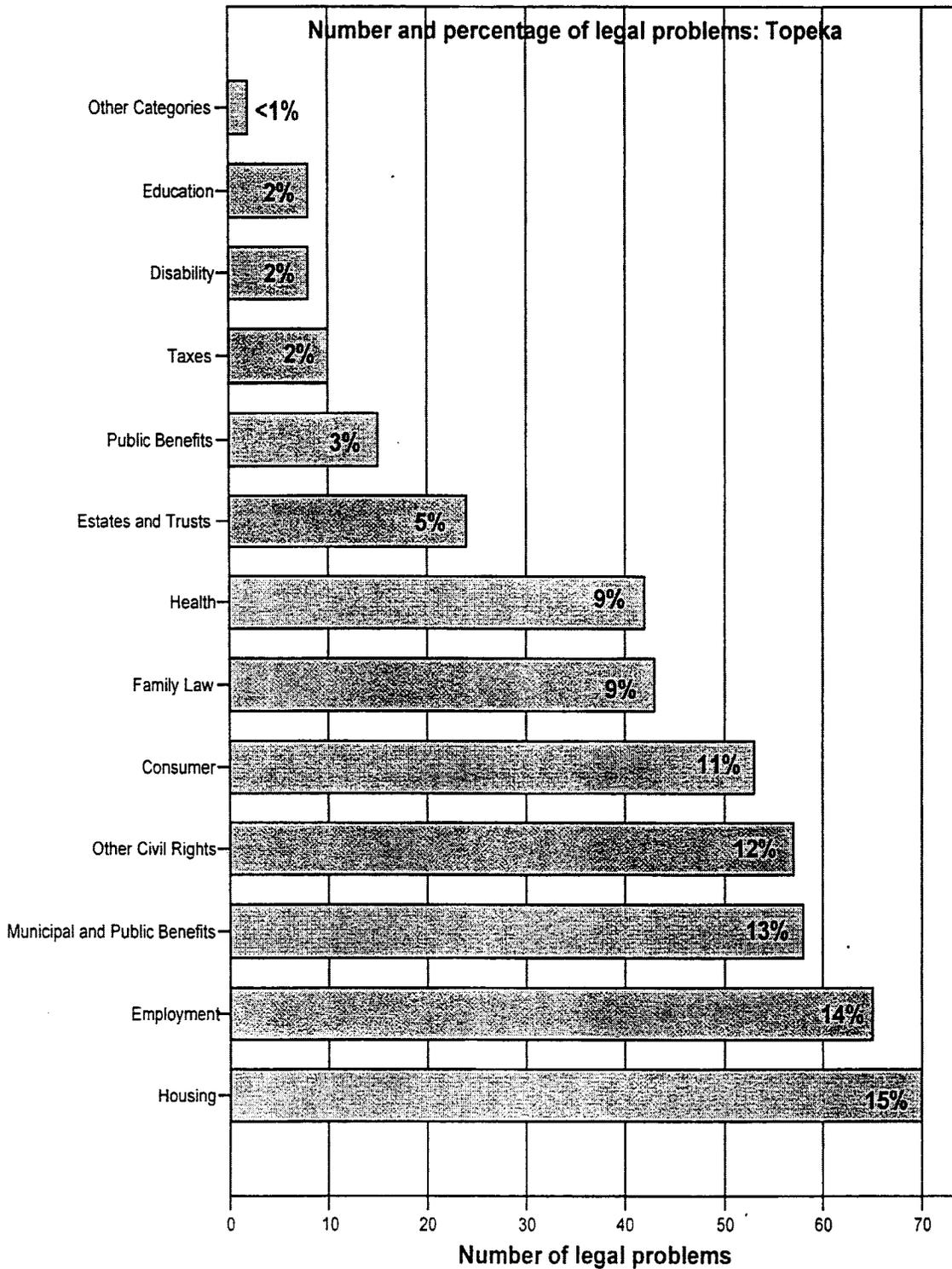


Fig. 10 Number and relative percentage of legal problems: Topeka.

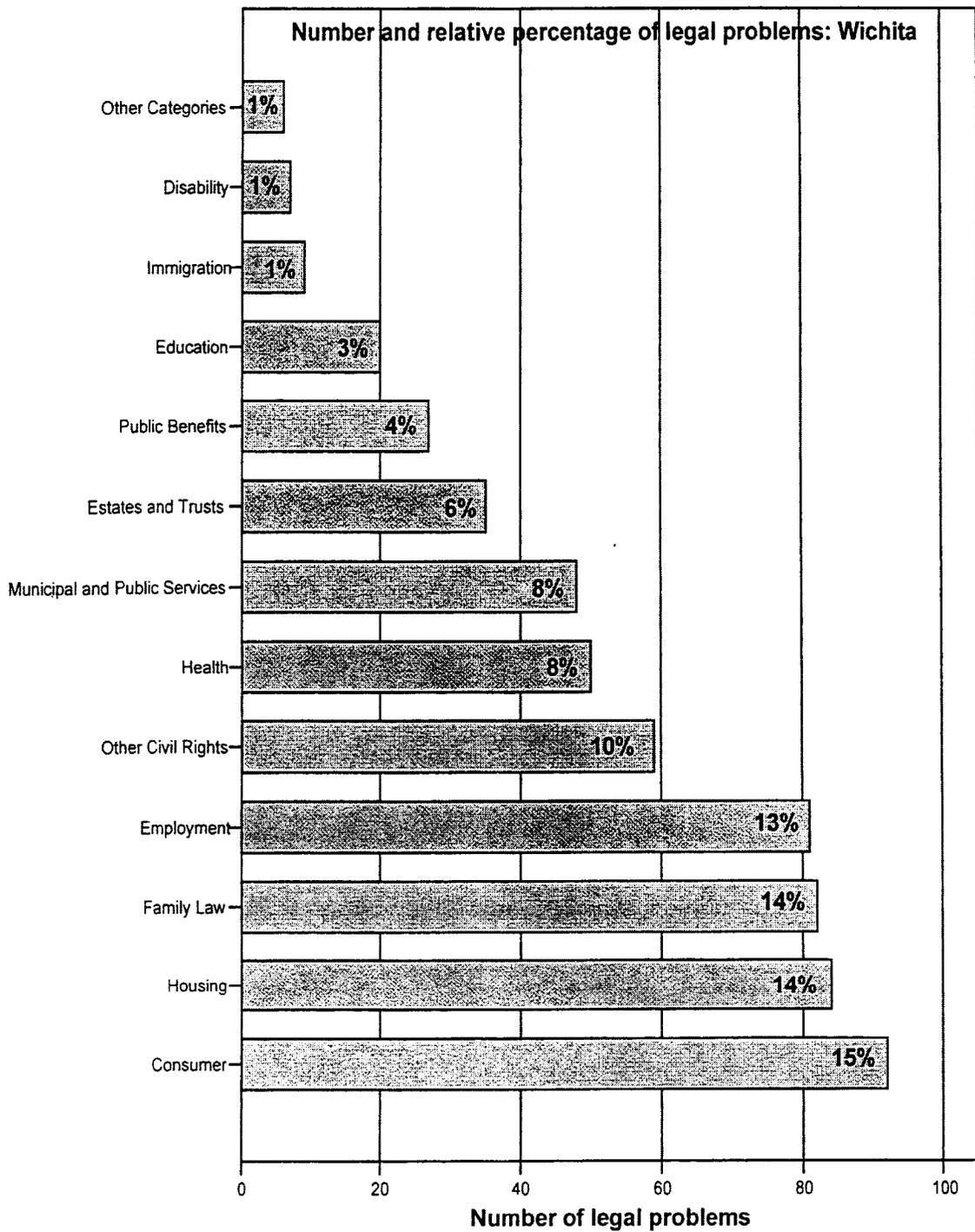
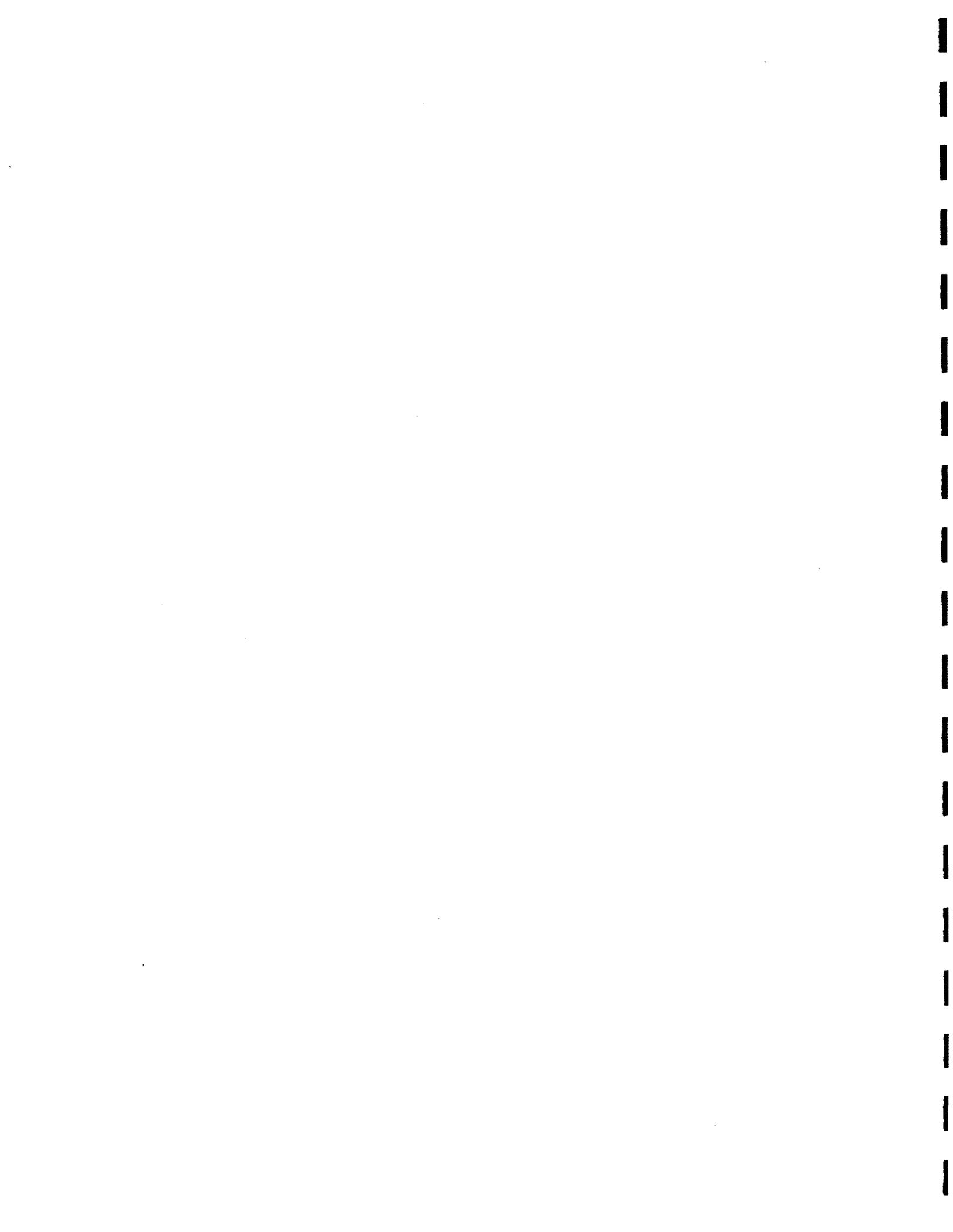


Fig. 11 Number and relative percentage of legal problems: Wichita.



Appendix C: Access to Technology

Numerous factors impacted the level of access to technology for low income Kansans. However, there were no significant differences in technology access reported between rural and urban regions. In regard to race, racial minorities reported had lower rates of access and Native Americans reported high levels of access (Fig. 1). However, only eighty percent of Native Americans reported a mailing address.

Fig. 1 Access to technology by race.

Reports of access to technology differed in terms of poverty level (Fig. 2-2). A slightly higher percentage people above the poverty line reported access to resources such as e-mail, the internet, and cable TV. A slightly higher percentage in this group reported a mailing address.

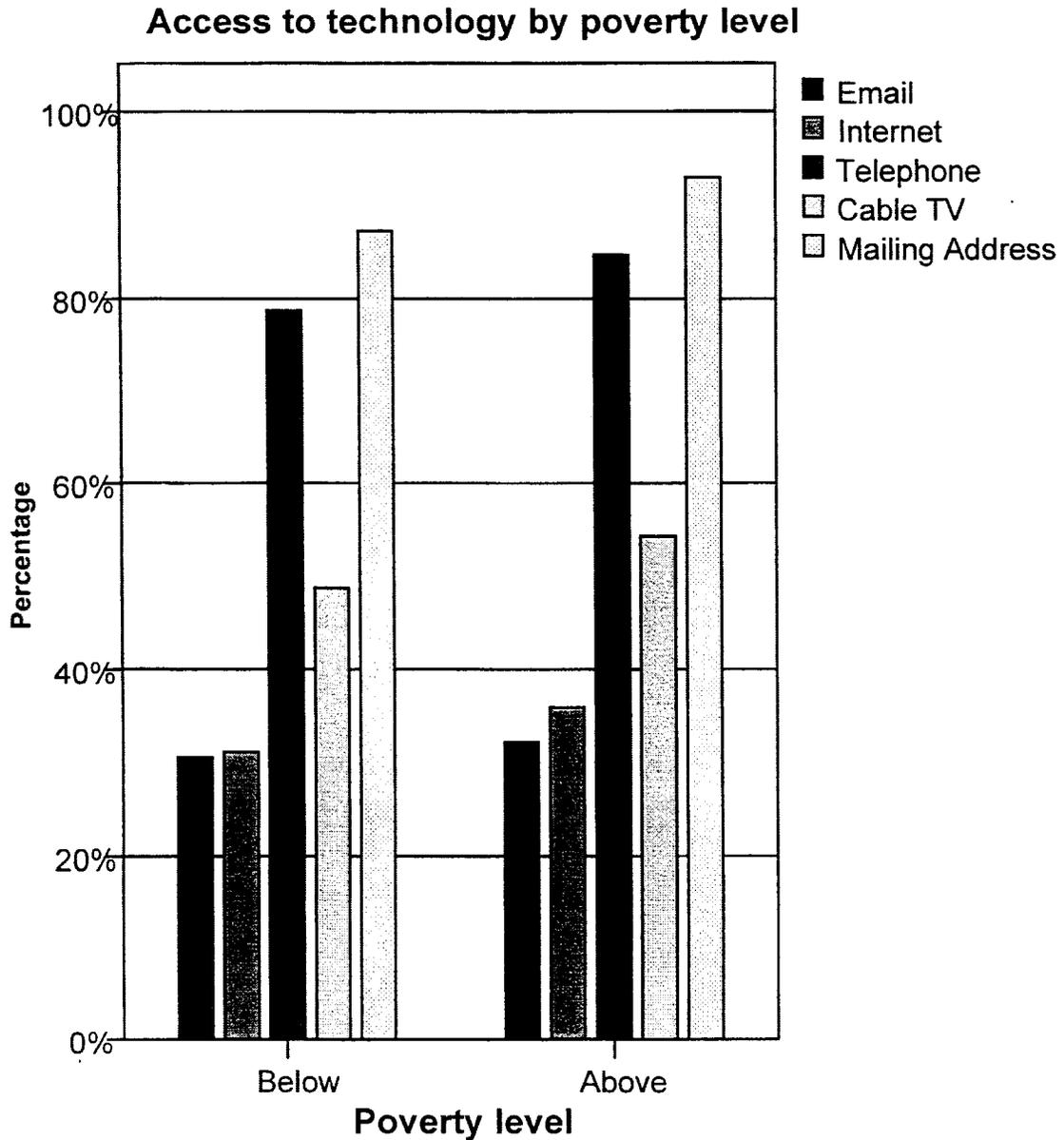


Fig. 3 Access to technology, by poverty level.

Appendix D: Validity and Response Rates

Validity: The KLNA ostensibly had a high level of validity for two reasons. First, a high comprehension rate was reported from respondents (Fig. 1). Nearly eighty percent of all respondents reported no difficulty recalling incidences, around one-fifth reported only a little difficulty, and less than three percent reported a fair or great amount of difficulty.

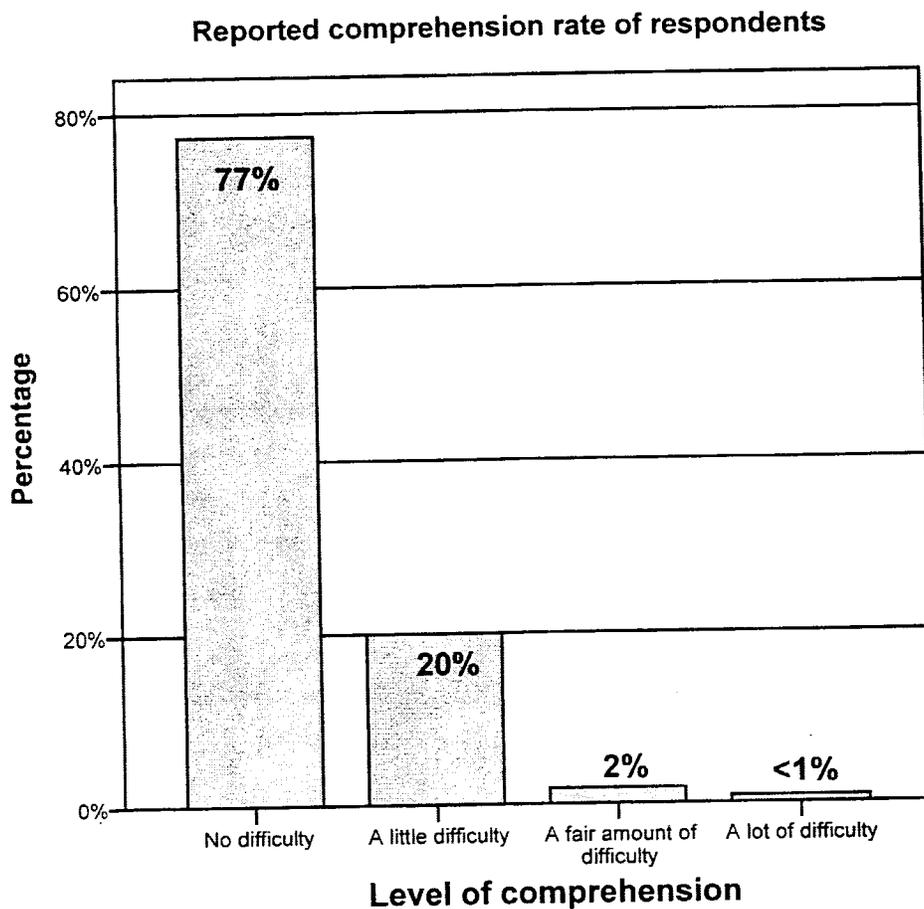


Fig. 1 Comprehension rates of respondents as reported by the interviewers.

Second, the KLNA also had a high level of cooperation among respondents (Fig. 2). Over ninety percent of all respondents were reported to be very cooperative by the interviewers. Only eight percent were rated fairly cooperative, while less than one percent of respondents were rated not very cooperative. The high cooperation rate was

likely a reflection of the monetary compensation given to respondents for their time and effort.

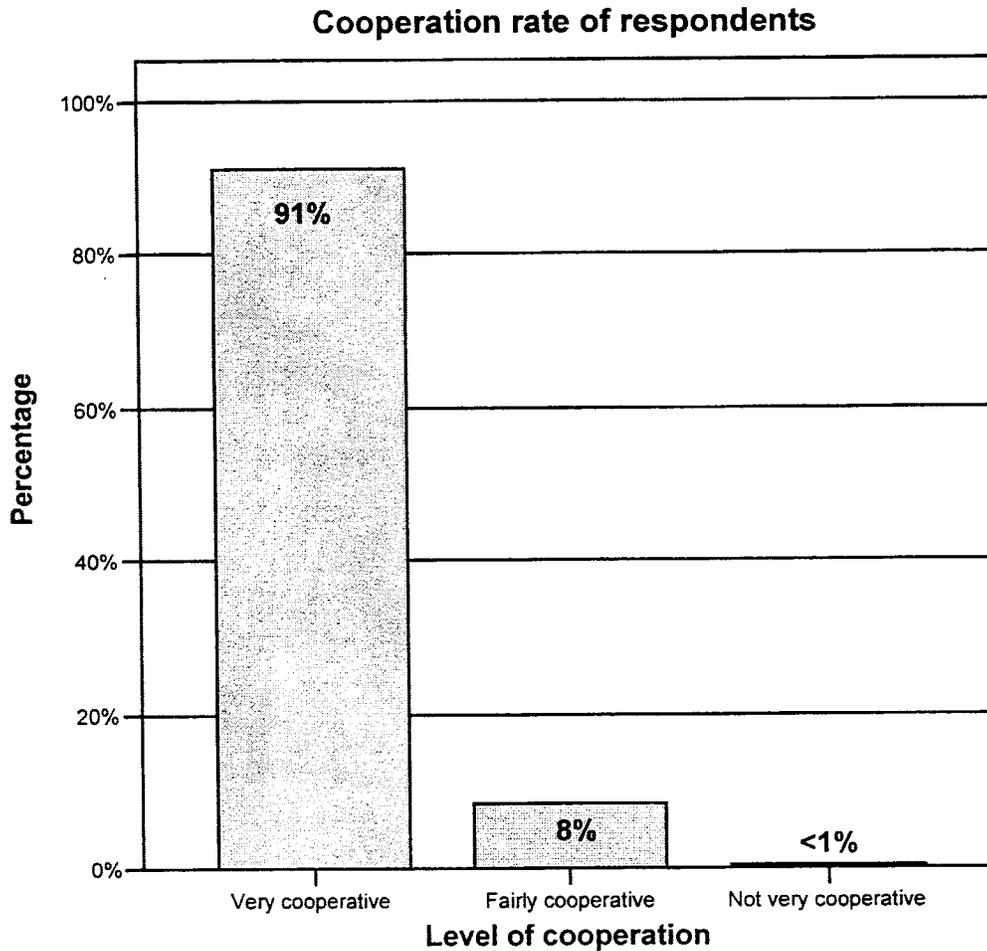
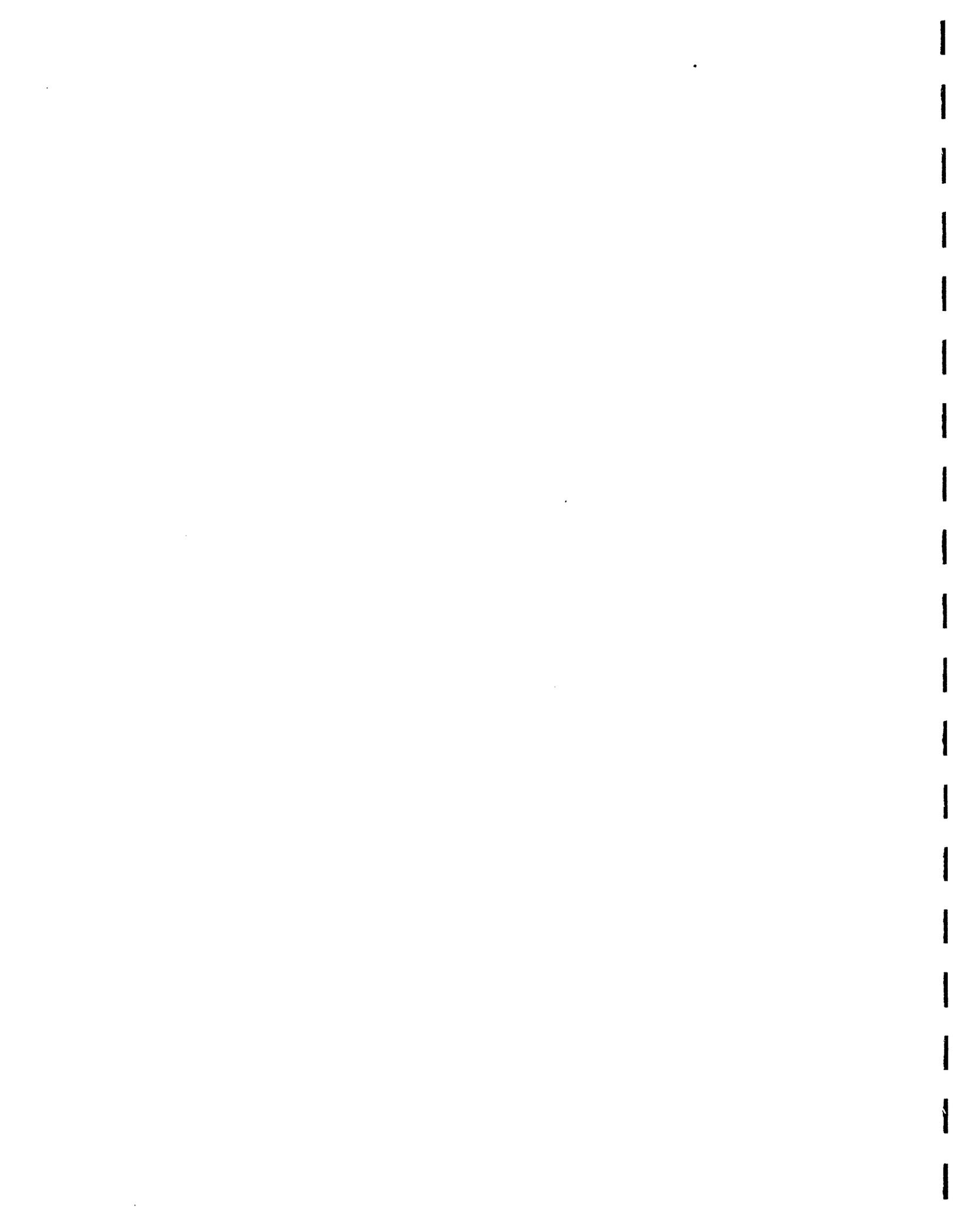


Fig. 2 Cooperation rate of respondents as reported by interviewers.

Response Rates: The overall response rate was very high at approximately eighty-two percent (i.e., of 800 surveys distributed, over 650 were returned). About 60 surveys were removed from the sample because the households were above 300 percent of the poverty line. This made the total N of the sample 587. All the KLS offices had high response rates with the exception of Manhattan, which had less than ten percent of its surveys included in analysis. Yet, given the high level of reliability of results, this low N is likely to be of little significance except in regard to specific statistics for the Manhattan region.

	percent Difference		# of Surveys done	# of Surveys for each office	percent†	percent*	# Below Poverty	Office
	0.00937967 2	0.070643 642	45	49.01117634	10.9	0.06126397	6,397	Dodge
	0.008	0.047	30	31.14	12.5	0.039	4064	Emporia
	0.000282	0.067504	43	54.22872	12.4	0.067786	7078	Hays
	0	0	25	27	11	0	###	Hutch
	0.07679251 7	0.106750 392	68	146.8343277	6.8	0.18354291	19,165	KC
	0.05619277	0.009419 15	6	52.4895371	15.9	0.06561192	6,851	Manhattan
	0.02589	0.12559	80	79.7571	14.3	0.0997	10,410	Pittsburg
	0.01029409	0.061224 49	39	40.7443232	9.1	0.0509304	5,318	Salina
	0.0091	0.0424	27	26.593	11.7	0.0332	3,471	Seneca
	0.02705032	0.166405 02	106	111.483762	11.8	0.1393547	14,551	Topeka
	0.03819828	0.263736 26	168	180.43039	9.4	0.22553799	23,550	Wichita
avg percent variation	0.02423041	1	637	800		1	104,417	TOTAL



Appendix E: Demographics of the Sample

The sample consisted of 587 cases. The sample was diverse and included many hidden and non-privileged populations. The following is an overview of the demographics of the sample:

Age: The mean age was 40 and the median age was 39. About thirty-four percent were below 30; thirty percent were between 30 and 44; twenty-three percent were between 46 and 60; and fourteen percent were above 60.

Disability: Over one in four respondents reported having a serious disability or serious health condition within the past year.

Education level: Over four percent reported completing only primary school; fifty-three percent high school; thirty-one percent some college; eight percent an undergraduate degree, and around three percent a graduate degree. Less than one-half of one percent reported the two ends of the education spectrum; no schooling or a Ph.D.

Geographic location: fifty-two percent of households were classified as urban, the rest were rural.¹

Household income and poverty level: The mean household income reported was a little over \$14,000. Three-fourths of all households reported incomes less than \$23,000. Approximately fifty-eight percent of households were below the poverty line while forty-two percent were above.²

Household size: The average household consisted of 2.2 people, with a median of 1 person. The largest family size reported was 17.

¹ Urban households came from the Kansas City, Wichita, or Topeka KLS office districts. The rest of the districts were categorized as rural.

² In instances of missing values the mean income was used as a method of extrapolation.

Housing: Sixty-two percent of households rented a house or apartment from someone else within the past year. Thirteen percent of all respondents reported owning or renting a mobile home. Over ten percent of households reported no mailing address (i.e., were functionally homeless). More than a quarter of respondents reported having at least one family member having to live in a homeless shelter within the past year. Over a third reported having to live in somebody else's house to avoid being homeless; while more than a quarter reported allowing somebody else to live in their house to avoid being homeless.

Immigration and migrant work: Nearly ten percent of the respondents were not U.S. citizens. Four percent of all respondents reported working as a seasonal or migrant farm worker at least once within the past twelve months.

Language: Around eighty-five percent reported speaking English as their primary language at home. Nearly thirteen percent reported speaking primarily Spanish; one percent German; and one percent "other." Other languages reported spoken were French, Swahili, Lakota, and Thai.

Public Benefits: Nearly two-thirds of all households reported receiving some kind of government benefit. Approximately forty-two percent reported receiving food stamps; thirty percent Medicaid; twenty percent TANF or GAU; seventeen percent Medicare; sixteen percent received SSDI; fifteen percent SSI, and eight percent other social security benefits. A number of respondents also reported receiving aid from programs like HealthWave, MediKan, and VA medical.

Race or ethnicity: About fifty-seven percent of respondents reported that they were Caucasian; twenty-four percent African-American; fifteen percent Hispanic or Mexican-American; three percent Native American; one percent Asian-American; and two percent "other." The other category included respondents reporting themselves as Cajun, Aztec, Asian-White, American Indian-White, Irish-German-Indian, and so forth.

Gender: A little over sixty percent of the respondents reported gender as female, while the rest were reported male.

Appendix F: Legal Category Definitions

The following is a list of legal need category definitions used in the KLNA. The list is adapted only slightly from the Washington State Legal Needs Assessment.

Consumer: Insurance issues, bankruptcy, contracts, warranties, abusive collection practices, discriminatory lending.

Disability: Disability discrimination; problems with adequate accommodation and access.

Education: Problems with access to school services; attendance and disciplinary issues; unsafe or discriminatory schools.

Elder law: Abusive treatment, problems entailing a group living facility such as improper medication, unfair discipline, or lost or stolen property.

Employment: Hiring or on-the-job discrimination, wage claims, workers compensation, migrant work issues.

Estates and trusts: Problems involving wills, estate planning, guardianship.

Family law: Domestic violence, child support, issues relating to child residential placement, adoption and foster care, divorce, separation.

Health: Discrimination by providers, disputes over charges, Medicaid or Medicare, exposure to health hazards.

Housing: Poor conditions, problems with utilities, purchase and sales issues, problems with a landlord or housing authority, housing discrimination.

Immigration: Claims for asylum, deportation, naturalization, work permits, other issues dealing immigration status.

Migrant issues: Employment, health, housing, immigration, and other issues relating to a person's status as a migrant worker. Related to the employment category.

Municipal and public services: Problems with schools and other government services, such as law enforcement responsiveness, planning, and zoning.

Native American issues: Issues relating to a person's Native American status, including disputes with government agencies, problems with living off a reservation, problems with tribal affiliation or enrollment, problems with tribal recognition or sovereignty, problems with land rights.

Other civil rights: voting and other civil rights not included in the other categories. Includes institutional issues involving a prison, jail, or juvenile detention facility.

Public benefits: Problems involving any needs-based public benefits such as TANF, food stamps, social security, and so forth.

Taxes: Problems related to state and federal taxation.

Appendix G:

Service Provider Interview Guide

1. Name
2. Organization.
3. Purpose of organization.
4. Interviewee's role in the organization.
5. What populations does your organization service?
6. What populations do you think need legal help?
7. What do you think they need help with legally?
8. Of these legal needs which are being met and which are not?
9. Who is servicing those legal needs? Is the service adequate? If not, why?
10. Do you think some populations need more legal help than others? Why or why not?
11. What level of legal service do you think is most important / needed (e.g., telephone advice or court representation)?
12. What do you think are the greatest barriers to low income groups that prevent them from successfully addressing their legal needs?
13. What low income populations do you think are more effective at securing access and why?
14. Do you think low income populations consider obtaining legal help a priority?
15. Are there any institutional legal needs that are not addressed? (i.e. affordable housing)
16. How effective do you think KLS is in helping the legal needs of your clients? What programs do you think work and what do not?
17. Do you route your clients to KLS?
18. Would you be willing to assist KLS with conducting the 2003 Kansas Legal Needs Assessment?